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(1650-1922)

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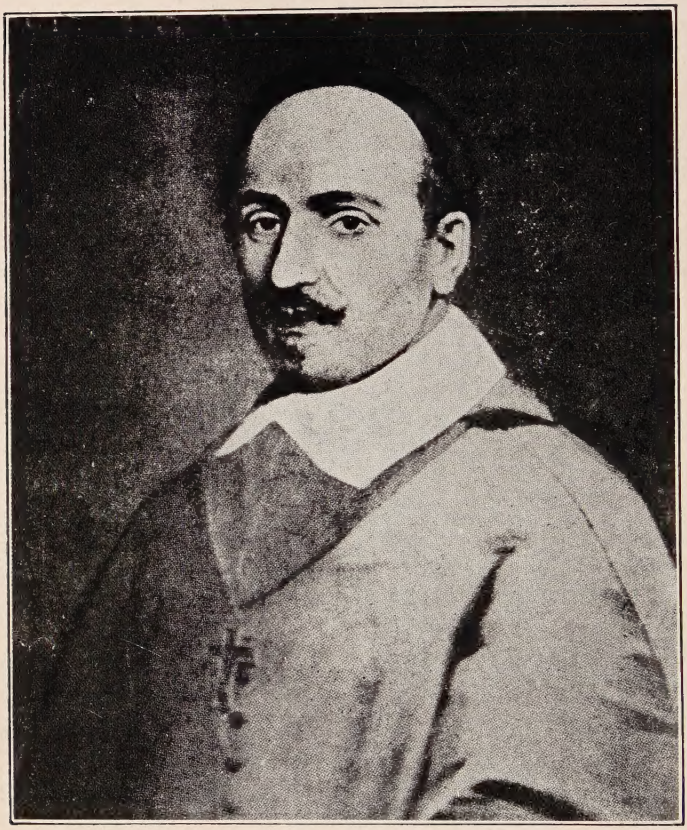

HENRY DE MAUPAS DU TOUR, BISHOP OF LE PUY AND OF EVREUX
1606–1680

The Congregation of Saint Joseph of Carondelet

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ITS ORIGIN AND ITS WORK IN THE UNITED STATES (1650-1922)

BY

SISTER MARY LUCIDA SAVAGE, PH.D.

OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CARONDELET, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

MOST REVEREND JOHN JOSEPH GLENNON

Archbishop of St. Louis

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DEDICATED TO

THE MEMORY OF OUR PIONEER SISTERS,
WHO, AT CARONDELET IN THE
DIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI,
LAID THE FOUNDATIONS OF
THE CONGREGATION
IN
AMERICA.

PREFACE

The history of a religious congregation is necessarily limited in scope. It is rarely of interest to the general public. Its importance is relative, in that it forms but a line, a paragraph, or a page in the larger history of the Church's activities. It is only to the congregation itself that a knowledge of its past is of vital significance. Viewed in its present workings, each religious community resembles many others. It is differentiated from all others in the circumstances which called it into being, the motives which actuated its founders, the ideals which have guided and influenced its growth. Thus the very identity of an institution is bound up irrevocably with the story of its origin, its development, and its traditions, all of which must be familiar to the workers of today, if the movements of yesterday are to be perpetuated and continuity of life and effort maintained. The past must impart its wisdom to the present that the future may justify both and fulfil their aspirations.

This history has been undertaken in the hope that a sympathetic understanding of the difficulties which beset a religious community in its progress may lead to a greater appreciation of all such bodies in the realization of their aims; and that youthful aspirants to a life of labor in the Lord's vineyard may draw encouragement from a view of obstacles happily overcome.

Two chief difficulties present themselves to the author of a work of this nature: the absence of striking events such as ordinarily render an historical narrative interesting to the general reader; and the meagerness of sources of information. The life of retirement from the world which all communities lead in a greater or less degree contributes largely to both. Sameness quite naturally pervades days, months and years regulated

by rule; and community annals, frequently the only sources of information, have rarely, if ever, been kept with a view to publicity. Few communities emerge from the by-paths of history often enough to be met with on the high-ways; and general works, even of Church history, are in consequence practically useless except at the cross roads, where they serve only to point the way.

The Congregation of Saint Joseph, suppressed during the French Revolution, suffered an irreparable loss in the destruction of its records kept previous to that event. For this period of the Congregation's history, the author has relied chiefly on the work of Léon Bouchage, chaplain for many years of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Chambéry, and a member of the Academy of Savoy, who, in the preparation of the *Chroniques des Soeurs de Saint Joseph de Chambéry,* had access to many unedited documents in various Departments of France, and to convent archives in France and Savoy. For assistance in collecting much material relative to the history of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in America, she is indebted to numerous members of her Congregation in different parts of the United States, to all of whom she makes grateful acknowledgment, especially to Reverend Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter, Superior-General, whose constant and helpful encouragement has been a source of inspiration.

She takes this occasion of thanking the Right Reverend F. G. Holweck of St. Louis for the use of manuscript letters belonging to the Rosati collection in the St. Louis Diocesan Archives; also Reverend Patrick William Browne, S.T.D., Instructor in Church History at the Catholic University of America, for valuable suggestions given. She expresses her gratitude in a very special manner to Reverend Nicholas Aloysius Weber, S.M., S.T.D., Professor of History at the Catholic University of America, under whose direction during three years the work was accomplished.

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INTRODUCTION

These latter days for many of our people are drab and gray. Life has lost the vigor, sparkle and buoyancy of previous years. Just as when a fever has run its course there comes exhaustion of body and mind, so today, after the war, our people are tired and disappointed, with little in the present to bring comfort, while the future looms up dark and threatening. Seeking relief from these conditions they rush madly to the amusement center, where one can laugh and forget. Unwilling or unable to do sustained thinking, they naturally seek amusement that requires no mentality. They must have something that will thrill them; let it be as foolish and as frivolous as you will, they enjoy it as tired children do and ask for more. Yet they would not be regarded as altogether thoughtless—as altogether frivolous. Even the tired mind or body still seeks employment. Hence we have from the benches the demand for action which they can interpret, movement which they can follow, and crime which they can analyze. They would be philosophers, psychologists and what not, provided only that, substituting the nervous system for the soul, you set up the abnormal, the irregular, the unmoral, for their inane and sympathetic study.

Under such conditions, it would appear to be highly inopportune to publish a book whose object is to tell "the short and simple annals" of a society of women whose only claim to attention is that they are and have been friends of the poor, teachers of little children and humble followers of the Nazarene; especially, when, as is the case before us, the accomplished writer must complete her task according to modern historical standards, writing only substantial truths in a substantial way. According to that standard, she must set down facts without exaggeration

or extenuation, calmly weigh them, coldly present them; and for embellishment, she may not go beyond the notes which serve as a reference. A book so written has little appeal to the world of today. For the world has been deceived so often during these last years; so much has been set before it as solemn fact, which proved to be the veriest fiction, that it has come to suspect everybody, accusing even the historian with being a propagandist. "A truce to facts and factmongers," they say; "give us the tinselled show, label it fantasy, dream, illusion. A passing show it may be; but what care we? We, too,. are passing, and after us—the deluge."

And yet even to those who so declaim, I commend this book. "Tolle, lege." Read the lines and then between them. Do you want something heroic? Well, there in the year 1650 in the Church of Le Puy, France, stands Bishop de Maupas. He hands to the lily-white daughters of France a cross. "Wear it openly," he says to them; "bear it bravely, just as Christ did up anguished heights. Carry it down the ways of pain into homes of fever, into the warrens of the poor; bear it to far off lands. Be it your oriflame, to light you to victory. When in death you resign it, let other hands and hearts like to yours in consecration take up the burden, preserving it ever in their and your society's keeping during the onrolling centuries."

Yes, gentle reader, you are right in claiming that human nature is inconstant, ever changing, ever seeking something new. Yet, today, in the face of a world's inconstancy, the Sisters of Saint Joseph, ten-thousand strong, still carry, still cherish, the cross their founder gave them. But the gentle reader may demand ungentle things. If so, let him pass on in these chronicles to where in 1793 the French Revolution had reached its climax. It was then her "citizenesses" manned the barricades and Dame Guillotine was their queen. Not without cause did they shout for liberty and demand it; for theirs had been an age-long oppression. But wholly without cause did they now demand death for those who served better than they the cause of the poor and

lowly. What care the "heroines" for home or vow, or faith or decency! Had they not their goddess of reason; and had they not the power; and why should they not claim the inhuman right in the name of humanity to send to death or exile its most devoted servants, the religious women of France. The blood red storm sweeps over the land. The pastors are stricken—the flock is dispersed; and now in the wake of the storm, from out their hiding places come the few that are left. The heroic Sister Saint John Fontbonne gathers together the scattered flock, lifts again the cross, invokes the protection of Saint Joseph, and builds anew for France and the Faith.

To the world, a Sisterhood is something static. It has its holy rules, its cloister, its black veil and its cemetery; that is, it so appears to the world; yet the truth is that nowhere else is there such abiding hope, nowhere such abundant yearning for a divine adventure. A Bishop from the banks of the Mississippi appeals to the Sisters of Saint Joseph to leave their home, their country and their friends, to bid adieu to the fertile plains, the vine-clad hills of their native land. From out the land of the setting sun comes the cry for help. It is the cry from the trader by the river and the Indian of the forest; and joyously they answer it. Theirs is a journey of four thousand miles over the waters of a turbulent sea, with no impelling force except the will of God and the winds that fitfully blow. The days pass by, and the sick and weary band of Sisters reach New Orleans—then up the Mississippi to their new home in the West.

To us in these days of steam and electricity, where wind and wave, time and tide, are largely conquered by the genius of man, this journey of theirs may not be regarded as an adventure; but when you recall the conditions of their home in France, their long journey hither and their persistent effort through it all to maintain the decorum and order of the religious life; when finally you see them here, homeless, in this strange land, such as it was almost a century ago (1836); when you consider that they had left behind them the gravelled paths and trim hedge-

ways of Carcassonne, of Lyons and Le Puy, to find here the poison-ivy and black mud of the Cahokia Bottoms, you will admit that there was in the hearts of the emigrants both courage and consecration.

Nor did this spirit of adventure desert the Community in its new home. From the North and the South, from the East and the West, the call came to them that they should go forth in God's name and teach. Prompt, joyous and generous was their response; until the entire land became the scene of their exploits, the pilgrims praying, teaching, and dispensing mercy everywhere they went. I would refer our gentle reader again to the story of their migrations, and particularly to that one towards the West; for the West has a charm all its own. It is the land where romance still loves to linger. At the call of the Vicar-Apostolic of Arizona, a group of Sisters set their faces towards the West. It was in the year 1870; and while many western railroads were built, yet to reach their destination in distant Arizona, it was necessary for the Sisters to travel by way of Omaha, Salt Lake, San Francisco, and then southward by boat to San Diego. From this vantage point, which lay by the placid waters of the Western Sea, the devoted band must leave that land of fruit and flowers to follow the trail that led eastward through mountain passes and across mighty rivers and deep-set cañons, onwards to the distant table lands of Arizona.

How they travelled, where they rested, requires little effort to imagine. What were the emotions, what the privations and the changing surroundings of their journey. One day they rest by the foot of the mountain where the wild flowers bloom. In the morning, they must travel on foot up the mountain side, too steep for the wagon to go; now desending through the perilous pass, to come to the mighty river, to rest by its banks, and to gain fresh strength to meet the further perils on the way. The cavalry from the Mexican frontier post greet them as they pass. Then from their hiding places come the Indian bands. The Chief is ready to attack his hereditary foes; but suddenly stops,

for the cross the Sisters bear reminds him of his ancient friend, "the black-robe." On they go, each day brighter, fairer and lonelier than the one that is gone. Now come the painted rocks and rainbow cañons, and the serried bluffs like Franciscans in prayer; and now the clear, cold calm of the plateau-land where earth and sky commingle; a land of sunshine with no shadow save of the soaring eagle; a land of distance, solitude and silence. It is the land of uplift, where, whether it be in the effulgent light of the sun by day or in the company of the near and friendly stars by night, spirit can commune with spirit and all with God. It was in such settings that the Sisters of Saint Joseph found a home at Tucson, Arizona, in 1870.

So far I have guided the gentle reader to just a few incidents in the life of the Saint Joseph Community. I will now ask him to read it all; and he will find that instead of being a story inane and impractical, it is everywhere shot through with the spirit of faith, of sacrifice and of romance. It is the history of a Sisterhood that in the long years of its existence has never defaulted; and the courage, sacrifice and fidelity of its members has never once been doubted, never questioned.

In the world of today there is a long red battle line; and many are the combatants engaged in the struggle on this side and that. The battle ground is the school room, and the reward to the victors is the soul of the child. The Sister teacher's desk is set by the edge of that thin red line. There today the Sister stands, fighting the battle in God's name, struggling to save His children. She has arrayed against her wealth and power, the limitless resources of Cæsar, whose camp is still set over against the Lord our God. While stands the Sister there, the Christian school shall stand, and the future is secure; but should the Sister teacher fail, or should the line of battle be forced back, then Christ's cause would be imperiled and the battle of the ages lost.

The Sisters of Saint Joseph are privileged to be the advanced guard today in that battle, which is of and for the Lord. We pray that many will come to help them in that struggle, to take

the place of the heroines who fall; to aid them in seeking new points of advantage, or furnish a reserve ready for action in these coming days which threaten. Not all our young women can be Sisters. Only those who are willing to make sacrifices—only those whose souls are touched with the flame of the spirit—only those who can see high emprise in leaving all to follow Him—only those who realize that there is no solitude where God is, and that no mortal task may claim them when the work of God is to be done.

JOHN J. GLENNON
Archbishop of St. Louis.

St. Louis, Missouri.
Octave of the Ascension
May 17, 1923.

The Congregation of Saint Joseph of Carondelet

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY, (1650–1794)

THE Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph was founded in 1650 at Le Puy, capital of ancient Velay in France. The organization of this community as a congregation of women without enclosure and with simple vows was, in the middle of the seventeenth century, almost an innovation. Many of the existing orders of women had their origin in the Middle Ages, and followed the rules of corresponding orders of men, but were different from the latter in this, that the women were subject to enclosure.

This regulation, imposed at first by Bishops, was made a law for all professed nuns by Pope Boniface VIII toward the end of the thirteenth century,[1] and again by Pope Pius V in a constitution of May 25, 1566.[2] The latter included even tertiaries with simple vows, by whom the active works of charity, impossible for cloistered religious, had been undertaken. The rigor of these laws, which remained in force for nearly three hundred years, had relaxed somewhat before the beginning of the seventeenth century; but enclosure was still looked upon as an essential safeguard for the life of prayer and penance entailed by the vows, and the approbation of the Holy See was withheld from such communities of women as did not observe the regulations of the cloister.

[1] Decree *Periculoso,* later confirmed by the Council of Trent. (Sess. XXV). cf. A. VERMEERSCH. Article "Nuns" in *Catholic Encyclopedia* vol. xi., p. 164.

[2] *Circa pastoralis. Bullarium Romanum. Tomus* VII, p. 448. 1859.

A century had passed since Saint Ignatius of Loyola revolutionized the existing system of religious life for men, hitherto monastic in character, by turning the mortification of the will to greater account than that of the body,[3] but this principle had not yet been incorporated to any extent in the rules for communities of women. It remained for Saint Francis de Sales to embody it in the spirit of the Visitation, though his rule was looked upon with disfavor by some ecclesiastics of his time because of its lack of austerity.[4] The Daughters of the Visitation of Saint Mary, as organized in 1610, were to combine the labors of Martha and Mary,[5] observing enclosure only during their year of novitiate, after which they should be free to engage in the duties of the active life. The first intention of their holy founder was to place them under the name and patronage of Saint Martha, "the hostess of our Lord, and the model of all who serve him in the poor."[6] His cherished idea was abandoned after the establishment of the Visitation at Lyons in 1615. In deference to the wishes of the Archbishop of that see, Denis de Marquemont, who urged Francis to erect his congregation into a cloistered order, the saint made the vital change which substituted solemn for simple vows, and removed his spiritual daughters from the wide field in which they had labored for five years.[7]

The friend and co-laborer of the Bishop of Geneva in the evangelization of France, Vincent de Paul, hesitated to give even the semblance of a religious society to the first Sisters of Charity, lest by so doing he might defeat the purpose of their organization. Though instituted in 1633, it was not until 1642 that four of the Sisters were permitted at their own request to

[3] ROBERT ORNSBY, *Life of Saint Francis de Sales*, p. 103. New York. s. d.

[4] MARIE JEAN HAMON, *Vie de Saint François de Sales*, vol. II, p. 84. Paris, 1883.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 78.

[6] LOUIS BOUGAUD, *Saint Chantal and the Foundation of the Visitation Order*, Translation; New York, 1895, vol. I, p. 339.

[7] *Ibid.* p. 395 ff. HAMON, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 77.

make annual vows for one year.[8] The spirit of the century is shown in the general enthusiasm which greeted the change in the Visitation, and the number of petitions for new foundations received by Francis de Sales after the establishment of the cloister.[9]

To this century belong the two men, illustrious alike for virtue and learning, who were destined in the Providence of God to inaugurate in a new congregation, that of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, the plan reluctantly given up by the Bishop of Geneva. These were Henry de Maupas du Tour, Bishop of Le Puy and later of Evreux, and John Paul Médaille, a zealous missionary of the Society of Jesus.

Henry de Maupas du Tour was born in 1606 at the family castle of Cosson near Rheims. His father was Charles de Maupas, Baron of Tour, a distinguished soldier, a statesman, and litterateur, counsellor of state to Henry IV.[10] His mother was Anne of Gondi. Very little is known of his early life, except that from his tenderest years, encouraged by pious parents, he showed an inclination for the service of the altar;[11] and as a member of the illustrious family of Gondi, to which Vincent de Paul was attached for a time as preceptor and spiritual guide, he was brought up under the influence of that holy man.[12] According to a much abused custom of the time, he was named at an early age commendatory abbot of St. Denis of Rheims. The emoluments of this position he dispensed in charity; and he later introduced into the abbey the Congregation of Sainte Geneviève.[13] He was successively vicar-general of Rheims and chaplain to Anne of Austria, wife of Louis XIII.[14]

[8] EMMANUEL DE BROGLIE, *Saint Vincent de Paul,* Translation by M. Partridge, London, 1898, p. 148.

[9] BOUGAUD, *op. cit.,* vol. I, p. 407.

[10] LAROUSSE, *Dictionnaire universel,* vol. X, p. 1357. Paris, 1873.

[11] LÉON BOUCHAGE, *Chroniques des Soeurs de Saint Joseph de Chambéry,* p. 5, Chambéry, 1911.

[12] *Ibid.* p. 6.

[13] MICHAUD, *Biographie universelle,* vol. XXVI, p. 316. Paris.

[14] LAROUSSE, *op. cit.,* vol. X, p. 1358.

In the latter capacity, he was again brought into close relations with Vincent de Paul, to whom, according to a contemporary prelate, the clergy of France owed their splendor and renown.[15] Many evils were afflicting the Church of that country; but, owing to the zeal and devotedness of Vincent, there existed, writes one of his biographers, "crowds of men and women, poor in spirit, clean of heart, and filled with the love of God, any one of whom would be regarded, outside of the Church, as a marvel and a prodigy."[16] That Henry de Maupas belonged to this chosen group, his intimate association with the Saint under whose spiritual direction he was for many years,[17] is alone sufficient guarantee. In 1641, he was appointed to the bishopric of Le Puy; but so averse was he to the honors and the burdens of the episcopate, that he did not enter on its duties until January 20, 1644.[18]

One of the noted preachers of his time,[19] he is described as a man of great humility, love of retirement, and zeal for discipline. He studied with interest and enthusiasm the life and works of St. Francis de Sales, whom he took for his model in the arduous labors of his diocese, and whose "spirit he revived in the heart of the Velay mountains."[20] He was the first biographer of the holy Bishop of Geneva, and one of the third commission appointed to inquire into the cause of the Saint's beatification.[21] From Le Puy, where for twenty years he had endeared himself to his flock, especially to the lowly, by the constant exercise of unbounded charity, he was removed

[15] Cf. HENRY BEDFORD, M.A. *Life of St. Vincent de Paul,* p. XIX, New York, 1888.

[16] *Ibid.* p. XIX.

[17] HAMON, *op. cit.,* vol. I, p. VIII. Bishop de Maupas pronounced a funeral eulogy of St. Vincent de Paul in the Church of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois. M. COLLET, *Life of St. Vincent de Paul,* p. 247. Baltimore, 1805.

[18] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 7.

[19] MICHAUD, *op. cit.,* vol. XXVII, p. 316.

[20] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 8.

[21] HAMON, *op. cit.* Preface to vol. I, p. VIII. The biography was published at Paris 1657 under the title *La Vie du Vénérable Serviteur de Dieu, François de Sales.*

in 1661 to the see of Evreux. In this diocese, says M. Hamon, "his name was for a long time celebrated for the missions which he procured for his parishes, the catechetical instructions which he gave, his tenderness for the poor, whom he made his sole heirs, his love for the Blessed Virgin, whom he exalted on every occasion, and his zeal for the glory of God." [22] He was offered the Archbishopric of Rouen in his later years; but deeming himself unworthy to hold so high a position in the Church of God, he refused it and remained at Evreux until his holy death in 1680.[23]

Associated with Bishop de Maupas in the foundation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph was a distinguished missionary of the Society of Jesus, John Paul Médaille. He was born in Viviers in 1608,[24] and at the age of fifteen was sent to the Jesuit College of Tournon, where the young scholastic, John Francis Regis, was pursuing his course in philosophy.[25] In 1628,[26] John Paul Médaille entered the Society of Jesus at Toulouse;

[22] HAMON, *op. cit.* Preface to vol. I, p. VIII. 7th ed., 1883.

[23] The tomb of Bishop de Maupas was discovered on February 26, 1895, in the sanctuary of the Cathedral of Evreux while excavations were being made for the erection of a new main altar. A leaden plate within the coffin contained the following inscription, partly obliterated:

Henricvs demavpasdvtovr, epvs Ebroicens etanteaaniciensis, abbas stidyonisii rhemensis etinsvlae Calvarae in diocesi Lvcionis, obiit 12 Avgvsti 1680 aetatis svae . . . "Pater Pavpervm." . . .

"Henry de Maupas du Tour, Bishop of Evreux, formerly of Le Puy, abbot of Saint Denis of Rheims, and of the Isle of Calvara in the diocese of Luçon, died August 12, 1680, in the year of his age . . . "Father of the Poor." . . . (Copy of above preserved in the archives of the Mother House, Carondelet.)

[24] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 587. SOMMERVOGEL, S. J., in *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus* (1894), vol. V, p. 856, gives 1618 as the date of his birth and the place Carcasonne. The date 1615 is given by LAROUSSE in *Dictionnaire universel,* vol. X, p. 1410. The discrepancy in dates and in other circumstances of Father Médaille's life is no doubt due to his being confused with a contemporary, John Pierre Médaille, also a Jesuit.

[25] ÉLESEBAN GUILHERMY, S. J., writes of Father Médaille that he was "formed in the school of St. Francis Regis," *Ménologue de la Compagnie de Jésus, Assistance de France, Première Partie,* p. 631.

[26] BOUCHAGE, p. 587.

and after the usual period of probation and study, taught grammar and the humanities in the college there. He was then engaged for six years in the teaching of philosophy; but being specially gifted as a preacher, he was assigned to missionary work, and sent to the same fields in which Francis Regis had labored before him.

For eighteen years, he devoted himself with apostolic zeal to the evangelization of the south and east of France, and earned the reputation of being one of the most illustrious missionaries of Velay, Auvergne, Languedoc and Aveyron.[27] Not satisfied with preaching, he formed everywhere confraternities of men and women on whom he enjoined the practice of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in order that the fruits of his labors might be multiplied and perpetuated.[28]

In the course of his missions, many of which were given in the diocese of Le Puy, he met with a number of young women who were desirous of retiring from the world to devote themselves to the service of God, but who, on account of their limited means, found it difficult to provide the dowry required by the cloistered orders.[29] Father Médaille, "appropriating one of the dearest ideas of the holy founder of the Visitation," [30] and desiring to see formed a community of women who "should unite the life of Martha with that of Mary, the exterior works of charity with the repose of contemplation," [31] conceived the design of suggesting to some zealous bishop the establishment of a congregation in which these women might sanctify themselves and at the same time serve God in the person of their neighbor.

In the spring of 1649, Father Médaille was called to preach

[27] P. PRAT, S. J. *Le disciple de Saint François Regis, Vie du P. Dauphin.* p. 180. Cited by BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 586.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 586.

[29] *Constitutions pour la petite Congregation des Soeurs de Saint Joseph,* Preface to 1st ed.; Vienne, 1693. BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 590.

[30] GUILHERMY, S. J. *op. cit.*, p. 631.

[31] *Ibid.*, p 631.

the Lenten sermons in the Cathedral of Le Puy. Knowing the great charity of Bishop de Maupas and his zeal for God's glory, the fervent missionary communicated to that prelate his ideas on the subject of a religious institution. Bishop de Maupas had long desired to see carried into effect in his diocese the original plan of Francis de Sales. He approved heartily the proposition now made to him of organizing a congregation of women with simple vows who should devote themselves to the works of teaching and of charity; and he at once took measures for its execution. To Father Médaille he entrusted the task of bringing together those who were eager for a life of retreat, and whose virtue and constancy had been tested. The result was that in the summer of 1650 a number of young women assembled at Le Puy to receive their spiritual training under the fatherly care of Bishop de Maupas.

Owing to the fury of the French Revolution, which, in the destruction of so many religious communities, swept away their records, no account remains of the individual lives or deeds of these first Sisters of Saint Joseph. In Sister Françoise Rambion, Sister Jeanne Pellet, and Sister Françoise Allion, we have the names of those who, in 1696, made the original foundation in Lyons; and the edition of the Constitutions printed in 1693 preserves in its preface the name and the memory of the early benefactress of the Congregation in Le Puy. This generous woman, Lucrèce de la Planche, was the widow of M. de Joux, a wealthy gentleman of Tence in the district of Yssingeaux. During the lifetime of her husband, she so devoted herself to the poor of Tence as to become "the visible providence of the villagers by her benevolent and active charity." [32] After his death, on account of the greater spiritual advantages to be enjoyed in Le Puy, she took up her residence in that city, and continued to dispense there with an open hand the goods which a kind providence had placed at her disposal.

To Madame de Joux the Bishop of Le Puy confided his project

[32] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 593.

of inaugurating a religious society; and with characteristic greatness of soul, she at once offered him her spacious dwelling until a more suitable place could be provided for the new community. Her home thus became the cradle of the Institute, a cenacle, as it were, in which the young aspirants, assembled from various parts of the diocese, received their first religious training. During three months, they were carefully instructed in the nature and obligations of the new life which they were about to embrace.

Their probation ended, on October 15, 1650, feast of the great reformer of Carmel, they knelt at the feet of Bishop de Maupas in the chapel of the Orphanage at Le Puy, and consecrated their lives to the service of God. The Bishop addressed them in words of comfort and encouragement, called them "Sisters of Saint Joseph," and formally installed them in their new home, the Orphanage, which he placed under their direction. Thus their first ministrations as an organized body were in behalf of the homeless little ones of Christ. In a short time, their number increasing, the orphan girls of Mont-Ferrand were also placed under their tender care.

In the meantime, the Constitutions were prepared by the two founders on the basis of the Augustinian Rule as elaborated by St. Francis de Sales for the first Visitandines, and supplemented by many regulations drawn by Father Médaille from the rule of St. Ignatius.[33] Minute provision was made for the manner of life and various works of the Sisters; the name of the Congregation, the first to be placed under the patronage of Saint Joseph,[34] was designated; and the form of the religious dress prescribed. This differed very little from the habit worn at present. It consisted of a robe of black serge, plaited in front and confined by a cincture. About the shoulders was worn a

[33] The name of Bishop de Maupas alone occurs on the title page of the Constitutions printed at Vienne in 1693; but the manuscript edition, preserved in Le Puy, is in the handwriting of Father Mèdaille, who is classed by Sommervogel (*op. cit.*, p. 856) as the author of them.

[34] GEORGES GOYAU in *Catholic Encyclopedia,* article "Le Puy," vol. IX, p. 186.

folded kerchief of white linen, and on the breast, a small, brass-bound crucifix. The veil worn indoors was short, and was folded back upon itself somewhat after the fashion of a hood. When the Sisters went abroad, they added a scarf two yards length, which they threw over the head, letting it fall on the shoulders, and knotting the ends on the breast.

So successful were the Sisters in the discharge of the first duties assigned to them, that on March 10, 1651, less than a year after its foundation, Bishop de Maupas gave to the young society his episcopal approbation. At the same time he recommended it to the bishops of the neighboring dioceses "in consideration of the great Francis de Sales, since it has been established to revive the spirit of the first institution which this prelate made." [35]

The Congregation thus auspiciously inaugurated prospered beyond the expectation of its worthy founders and its first members. These could not possibly foresee, writes Léon Bouchage, that, two centuries and a half later, surviving the storms of the great Revolution, the tree of which they were the weak roots, would spread its branches over all of France, nearly all of Catholic Europe, and on every continent.[36] Father Médaille, continuing his missionary labors in the south of France until 1672, did not cease during that time to take an active interest in what he loved to call his "little design"; and there can be no doubt that he strengthened it with his prayers until his holy death at Auch in 1689. Madame de Joux, with extraordinary zeal and fervor, devoted the remainder of her life to its advancement; and she had the consolation of seeing, within the first few years after its foundation, schools and asylums established successively in Saint-Didier, Tence, Basen-Basset, Dunières, Saint-Paulien, and Monistrol.[37] Bishop de Maupas,

[35] P. F. LEBEURIER, CANON OF EVREUX, *Vie de la Révérende Mère Saint Joseph*, Translation, New York, 1876, p. 68.

[36] *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

[37] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 594.

removed to the see of Evreux in 1661, bequeathed his interest in the Sisters of Saint Joseph to his successor, Armand de Bethune. This prelate gave his approval to the rapidly growing Congregation in 1665; and in order that it might not lack a legal status, he obtained for it in the following year letters patent from the reigning King, Louis XIV.

In addition to these authorizations, the Constitutions received the formal approval in 1668 of Henry Villars, Archbishop of Vienne, into whose diocese the Sisters of Saint Joseph had been introduced. Under his direction, the first printed edition of the Constitutions, bearing the date November 24, 1693, was made at Vienne from the manuscript copies in use until then. According to these Constitutions, formulated in 1650 and observed for one hundred and forty years, each house was distinct and independent. No provision was made for a general superior, assemblies or chapters. Each community maintained its own novitiate, elected its superioress and principal officers, or, if not sufficiently numerous, received them immediately from the bishop. The bishops were the superiors, each in his own diocese, and they appointed spiritual fathers, whom they designated for one or several houses. Each house sent out from time to time new missions, which, when able to maintain themselves, were independent of the parent house, and which in their turn gave rise to other colonies under the same conditions.

In 1693, the Sisters of Saint Joseph were spread throughout the dioceses of Le Puy, Clermont, Grenoble, Embrun, Sisteron, Viviers, Ussé, Gap, Vienne, and Lyons. In all of these they were successfully engaged in the instruction of young girls, the direction of orphanages, and the care of the sick. Many large institutions were placed under their direction, among them the great Hôtel-Dieu in Vienne; and they continued to grow and to shed their benign influence until checked in their prosperous career by the fury of the Revolution.

At the outbreak of the latter, Monistrol, a beautiful city on the Loire in the diocese of Le Puy, was the home of a large and

edifying community under the direction of Mother Saint John Fontbonne. This valiant woman was destined to play an important part in the later history of the Congregation. She was born at Bas, in the department of Haute Loire, March 3, 1759, the daughter of Michel Fontbonne and Jeanne Theillère, a God-fearing couple of that place. Trained by pious parents from her infancy in the love and fear of God, Jeanne, as she was called in baptism, was sent when still very young with an elder sister, Marguerite, to a convent of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, in Bas. In this convent were two of her paternal aunts, Mother Saint Francis, the Superior, and Sister Mary of the Visitation. Under their careful supervision, the two girls were educated, and as they grew into young womanhood, developed many admirable traits. Jeanne, especially, bright and attractive, spirited and quick at repartee, but sweet and amiable in disposition, became a favorite among her companions, who recognized her beautiful qualities of mind and heart. The gentle Marguerite, devotedly attached to her younger sister, yielded in everything to the latter's superior judgment.

Both were early attracted by the beauty of the religious life, and signified their intention of taking upon themselves its obligations. Of Jeanne, Monsignor de Gallard, Bishop of Le Puy, remarked to Mother Saint Francis on the occasion of a visit to the convent: "She is called to do great things, and will yet be the glory and the light of your Congregation." [38] It was Jeanne who broached to her parents first the subject of Marguerite's vocation, then of her own. The pious couple, resigned to the departure of one daughter, would not at first consent that Jeanne, who they had hoped would be the support and solace of their old age, should leave the ancestral home. Their great faith, however, triumphed over nature; and on July 1, 1778, the two sisters, with their parents' consent and blessing, entered the newly-founded novitiate of the Sisters of Saint Joseph at Moni-

[38] ABBÉ RIVAUX, *Vie de la Révérende Mère Saint Jean Fontbonne*, p. 106. Grenoble, 1885.

strol. They were clothed with the religious habit on December 17 of the same year, the elder receiving the name of Sister Teresa, the younger, of Sister Saint John; and together they began the long career in the course of which they were to pass through the fires of persecution, and strengthen and console each other until separated by death.

Their novitiate ended, they remained in Monistrol; and in October 1785, Sister Saint John, then in her twenty-seventh year, was appointed Superior of the Sisters in that place. She assumed the duties of this office with reluctance, feeling that her youth and inexperience unfitted her for a position of authority. She soon developed, however, more than ordinary talent for administration, and won all hearts by her sweetness and zeal. Mother Saint John had been governing the community at Monistrol for six years when the effects of the Revolution were felt in the diocese of Le Puy. The venerable Bishop de Gallard, refusing to take the civil oath required of the clergy, was forced into exile and took up his residence in Switzerland.

The position of the Sisters, rendered extremely difficult by the loss of their ecclesiastical superior, became one of real danger when the pastor of Monistrol joined the ranks of the constitutional clergy, and drew with him in his defection many of his misguided parishioners. These failed to understand the attitude of Mother Saint John, when, in the name of her community, she refused to comply with the civil regulations. Repeated attempts were made to exact from her the oath of allegiance, but all were alike fruitless. At length, the intrepid Superior, threatened with violence, deprived of sympathy and protection by the blindness of those whom she had so often assisted, and fearing for the lives of her Sisters, persuaded the latter to return to their families, there to await the coming of better times.[39] She, with two devoted companions, Sister Teresa and Sister Martha, remained at the convent until they were rudely forced into the street. Their own doors barred against them by

[39] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

MOTHER SAINT JOHN FONTBONNE
1759–1843
(Copy of a portrait painted from life. Original in Mother House, Carondelet.)

the emissaries of the Revolution, they sought refuge at the Fontbonne home in Bas, which had become a shelter for proscribed priests and religious.[40] Here, disguised in peasant dress, for two years they gathered together the children of the district and instructed them in their religion, praying and trusting all the while that God would send peace to His Church. In this retreat, they were discovered by their persecutors in the fall of 1793, and conducted to the prison of Saint Didier, twelve miles from Bas.

Mother Saint John could rarely be induced, in later years, to speak of this period of her life, of the eleven months of suffering which she and her companions endured in damp cells, deprived of every physical comfort, and above all of the consolations of religion, Mass and the Sacraments. Her aged father, bowed with years and grief, frequently walked twelve miles to bring them wholesome food and to plead for their release. They had little hope of being permitted to leave the prison, and daily held themselves in readiness for death, not knowing when they would be summoned to the scaffold. Announcement was at length made to them one evening in midsummer, 1794, that their execution would take place the following day. The night was spent by them in final preparation for their approaching end. When morning dawned, and the great doors of their dungeon swung open, their disappointment was great to find that freedom and not death was waiting for them.

The Reign of Terror had spent its force, and its tyrants had become its victims. Robespierre had fallen, and in his death many found life and liberty. "Oh, my Sisters," was Mother Saint John's exclamation on hearing the news of their release, "we were not worthy to die for our holy religion; our sins have put an obstacle in the way of this great favor." [41] The crown of martyrdom for which she longed fell to the lot of many of

[40] RIVAUX, *op. cit.*, p. 131.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

her friends and seven of her Sisters in other parts of France.[42] In 1793, on the Place du Martouret in Le Puy, Sister Saint Julien Garnier and Sister Alexis were executed; Sister Anna Marie Garnier and Sister Marie Aubert were guillotined in a little town of Haute Loire on June 16, 1794,[43] and at Privas, August 5, 1794, Mother Sainte Croix Vincent, Sister Madelaine Senovert and Sister Marie Toussaint Dumoulin, laid down their lives for the Faith.[44]

Mother Saint John with her companions was again received with open arms in her father's home. She desired ardently to collect her scattered community in their convent at Monistrol; but she found that this property had been sold by the government, and could not be repurchased, as the laws dispersing the Congregations[45] still remained in force. For twelve years, these three noble women devoted themselves to pious exercises, the instruction of the ignorant, and the care of the poor and sick, never doubting that God would in time repair the ruin wrought by an irreligious government.

They were consoled and encouraged in their trials by Bishop de Gallard, from whom they received sympathy and advice in a lengthy communication written from Switzerland July 19, 1798. He said in part:

The distress in which I see you, my dear Daughters, pierces me to the heart; and owing to my own personal necessities, I am powerless to help you. But, accustomed as you are to privations and sacrifices, practiced in imitation of our Divine Model, who had

[42] Mother Saint John noted down in a little memorandum book the names of twenty-one of her friends and acquaintances, most of them ecclesiastics, who were executed during her own imprisonment.

[43] Probably Feurs, as five Sisters were imprisoned there.

[44] *Annals of the Sisters of St. Joseph*, Le Puy. Cited by RIVAUX, *Life of Mother Saint John* (Translation, 1887), p. 96.

[45] On February 13, 1790, all Orders requiring solemn vows were abolished by the state. In August 1792, all other Congregations devoted to teaching and charity were abolished. ROBINSON AND BEARD, *Outlines of European History*, pp. 127, 128. Boston, 1904.

nowhere to lay His head, and penetrated with confidence and love for our Heavenly Father, who feeds the birds of the air, you will cast yourselves into the hands of Divine Providence, and await with patience from His infinite bounty, the reward of the sacrifices which you have already made, and which you are ready to make again, for His glory and the sanctification of your lives. How holy and unfathomable are the designs of God in our regard, when He has permitted impiety to violate the sanctuaries of virginity, and to cast forth their inmates into the midst of a perverse and irreverent world! Heaven has wished to make you a spectacle to angels and to men. God has scattered you, as seeds of flowers blown about by the wind, and He has strewn you everywhere—in cities, in towns, in country places—to diffuse the good odour of Jesus Christ. Called to so sublime a mission, and having proven yourselves so worthy of fulfilling it you give me no cause to fear the future.[46]

After congratulating them on being found worthy to suffer for Justice's sake, he closed his admirable epistle with an exhortation:

Let us humble ourselves under the powerful hand of God, who has visited us. Let us cast upon Him our solicitudes and our needs, and in the midst of our sufferings we shall find our safety, our protection and our strength in the God of all grace, who has called us to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus our Lord.[47]

[46-47] RIVAUX, *op. cit.*, Letter quoted entire, pp. 154 ff.

CHAPTER II

RESTORATION AND SPREAD OF THE CONGREGATION

(1807–1835)

In the summer of 1807, there came to Mother Saint John the opportunity which she had so long desired of reassembling the scattered remnants of her beloved community. Six years had passed since religious worship had been restored in France.[1] The congregations which had been suppressed were returning to their former activities, slowly at first and tolerated by the government rather than authorized by it. In the diocese of Lyons, Cardinal Fesch, since his elevation to that see in 1802, was zealously engaged in reviving the various institutes of men, especially those devoted to teaching and to the foreign missions.[2] Though Napoleon declared these again dissolved after his rupture with the Pope, he encouraged the reconstruction of such communities of women as were engaged in teaching and active work of charity.[3] The Sisters were not slow to take advantage of this concession, and by the fall of 1807, numerous congregations were in existence throughout France, either restored or of recent origin.

The Cardinal was not ignorant of the good accomplished by the Sisters of Saint Joseph prior to the Revolution; nor was the name unknown to him of the former Superior of Monistrol, to whom life and liberty counted as nothing when placed in the balance against loyalty to God and His holy religion. It was in deference to his expressed wish for the re-establishment of the

[1] The Concordat between Pius VII and Napoleon I was signed July 17, 1801.

[2] MGR. RICARD, *Le Cardinal Fesch*, p. 62. Paris, 1893.

[3] GEORGES GOYAU in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, article "Napoleon," vol. X, p. 690.

Sisters of Saint Joseph in his diocese, and in obedience to his summons, that in the summer of 1807, Mother Saint John, accompanied by several members of her former community, repaired to Lyons.[4]

The first foundation, however, was not made in his episcopal city, but at Saint Etienne in Forez. Next to the guiding hand of Providence, this circumstance was due to the Reverend Claude Cholleton. A native of Saint Symphorien, this venerable priest was, at the outbreak of the Revolution, a teacher of theology in the Seminary of Saint Charles. He proved himself a fearless confessor of the Faith, and, refusing to take the impious civil oath, was banished from France. Returning to his native land after a brief exile in Italy, he was again arrested, and on May 29, 1795, deported to the island of Rhé,[5] whither more than eight hundred persecuted priests had preceded him.[6] From this place, he soon made his escape, and for several years exercised the zeal of an apostle, laboring secretly in the mountainous districts of Forez, and enduring all manner of hardships that he might avert the spiritual ruin of his countrymen.[7] In 1803, he was pastor of one of the largest parishes in Saint Etienne.

Here he took under his direction a number of young women who were living in community, and endeavoring to repair as far as they could by their penitential lives and good works the ravages caused to religion by the fearful storms through which it had passed. Without giving them any set form of rules, Father Cholleton taught them the way of the spiritual life, directed their exercises of piety and charity, and grounded them so well in humility that the ambition of each was to be the last of all.[8] They occupied a modest house in the *Rue de la Bourse* known as the Maison Pascal, from which they went out only on

[4] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 70.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 72.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 72.
[8] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

errands of mercy to the poor and the sick. They spent their time in almost continual prayer, observed severe fasts, slept on hard pallets, and made frequent use of the cilice and other instruments of penance. Their dress, secular rather than religious in character, consisted of a skirt and corsage of coarse black stuff, a serge apron, and a curious head-dress of cotton print which fastened under the chin.[9] For want of a distinctive title, they were variously known as the *Black Sisters,* on account of the color of their dress, and the *Sisters of a Good Death,* because of their zeal in procuring spiritual comfort for the dying.

Appointed Vicar-General of Lyons in February, 1805,[10] Father Cholleton was entrusted with the direction of the religious communities of the diocese.[11] This was his opportunity to give definite form to the Society which had claimed so much of his pious care and attention. Consulting the Cardinal on the subject, he was advised by the latter to place his Sisters under the guidance of Mother Saint John Fontbonne, that, instead of forming a new congregation in the Church, they might "reap the inheritance of the Sisters of Saint Joseph," [12] by being trained according to the approved rules of that institute. Like another Saint Francis de Sales, Father Cholleton gave up his own plan to adopt that of the Archbishop of Lyons.

A man of deep and sincere piety, and given to the practice of great austerity, he had not spared the little community of the *Rue de la Bourse,* but had accustomed its members to silence and contemplation, to severe poverty and complete renunciation of self.[13] Thus when Mother Saint John arrived at Saint Etienne on August 14, 1807, she found not only a field "white for the harvest," but a group of laborers well disciplined in the spiritual life. The richest fruit of their training appeared in the readiness with which they placed themselves through obedience

[9] *Manuscript of Sister Louise Pellet.* Cited by BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 20.
[10] RICARD, *op. cit.,* p. 124.
[11] ABBÉ LYONNET, *Le Cardinal Fesch,* vol. I, p. 397, Lyons, 1841.
[12] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 75.
[13] *Ibid.,* pp. 65, 74.

under a strange Superior, changed materially their mode of life, and adapted themselves to a less rigorous one than that to which their inclinations had led them. Another sacrifice was soon demanded of them in the loss of their holy director, Father Cholleton. He had accompanied the Cardinal to Paris, where on November 25, 1807, his edifying death occurred after a week's illness.[14] He was attended in his last moments by the Cardinal, whom with his dying words he exhorted to be firm, as he feared that the Church in France had still much to suffer.[15] Cardinal Fesch was deeply affected by the death of his vicar, which he considered a personal loss.[16]

Eager as Mother Saint John Fontbonne had been to see her Congregation again in a flourishing condition, it was not without some reluctance that she assumed the rôle of second founder. She realized fully the greatness of the task before her, and in the low esteem in which she held herself, felt diffident of her ability. Her aged parents, grief-stricken at the thought of parting with her again, endeavored to dissuade her from her purpose of leaving them.[17] She had been snatched, as it were, from the scaffold and placed in their arms, and they had hoped to keep her with them as a solace in their declining years; but for her, the voice of authority was the voice of God. Her grace of vocation on the one hand, and her parents' strong faith on the other triumphed over the sentiments of nature, and she answered the call of her ecclesiastical superiors.

She was strengthened and encouraged on her arrival at Saint Etienne by the devotion of her new Sisters, who received her with filial affection, and as time went on, responded generously to her training. On July 14, 1808, thirteen of the community hitherto known as the *Black Sisters* received the habit of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the convent of the *Rue de la Bourse*. Among them were Sister Saint John Baptist, Suzanne Marcoux,

[14] RICARD, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 219.
[16] LYONNET, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 118.
[17] RIVAUX, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

daughter of a prosperous merchant of Saint Etienne, and Sister Saint Regis, Anna Matrat, of La Valla in Forez, in whose charge the fervent community had been before the arrival of Mother Saint John Fontbonne.[18] Both were to prove strong factors in fulfilling the great destiny predicted on this occasion by Father Piron, successor to Father Cholleton as parish priest of St. Etienne,[19] for the Congregation thus revived. "You are few in numbers," he said, "but like a swarm of bees, you will spread everywhere"; [20] and he urged them to preserve the simplicity and humility that should characterize the daughters of Saint Joseph.[21]

Another and larger convent was soon acquired in the *Rue Mi-Carême,* where, in the course of the year 1808, a chapel was built. It was the home of Mademoiselle Benneyton, a pious young woman, who with a number of her companions, entered the Community and received the habit on April 20, 1809. This was the third addition to the Sisterhood, the second having been made on January 3 of the same year. For eight years, the convent in the *Rue Mi-Carême* remained the novitiate of Saint Etienne, and from it as a center went out numerous groups to make new foundations or to assist in reviving the old ones. In less than three years, Lyons boasted three promising institutions in charge of the Sisters of Saint Joseph; Saint Etienne and Monistrol confided to them the care of their orphans; and the schools of Valbenoite, Saint Chamond and Sury-le-Comtal, each received its contingent of devoted teachers.

Privations and difficulties were waiting for the Sisters everywhere, but sacrifices were nothing to those who had already borne so much. In old buildings, in abandoned monasteries and dilapidated châteaux, they took up their work and carried it on with zeal. At Sury, where M. Coccard, the worthy curé who had requested and obtained three Sisters for his school, had, through

[18] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 164.
[19] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.* p. 48.
[20] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 48
[21] IBID. p. 48.

some inadvertence, made no provision for their shelter, they did not disdain the offer of an unused barn, which their willing hands soon made comfortable, and where, until a more respectable abode was provided, emulating the example of their divine Master, they literally slept on the straw of the manger.[22]

On April 10, 1812, the Congregation received the authorization of the State.[23] By this time the need was felt of a general novitate for the uniform training of young members, and a central, or Mother House, from which the work of the Sisters might be directed by a Superior-General. The number of convents was increasing rapidly. In many of these, the communities were small; and though all looked to Mother Saint John Fontbonne as the guiding spirit and inspiration of the whole body, each house, as before the dispersion, was independent, had its own superior, and received and trained its own subjects.

Though the benefits of a centralized organization were evident, the change from existing conditions was made slowly. The new idea required time to materialize. If the reasons from without which urged its adoption were many, those from within which hindered its being acted on hastily were not a few. Chief among the latter was the difficulty of breaking away from the traditions of a century and a half, during which the older form had worked successfully. The Revolution had shown, however, the weakness of the small and isolated groups, and their inability to withstand such great force as had been recently hurled against them. Everywhere was felt the necessity for unity of effort and direction, and objections to the new order gradually gave way. As to a Superior-General, there could be but one choice, Mother Saint John Fontbonne, the strong-souled woman to whom the Congregation owed its regeneration. Her election was approved by the diocesan authorities, who also designated Lyons as the place of the Mother House and novitiate, both on account of the character of that city as a center of religious activity, and the

[22] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
[23] LEBEURIER, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

number of convents there belonging to the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Acting on the advice of Reverend Marie Claude Bochard, first spiritual Father of the Community, Mother Saint John secured a building known as the Château of Yon on the "hill of the Chartreux." This hill, so called because of an ancient Carthusian monastery located on its summit, was on the left bank of the Saône, opposite the celebrated shrine of Fourvières. The château was formerly a dependency of the monastery, and to it were attached a court, extensive gardens and a granary. Confiscated with the monastery and sold in 1791, the domain passed through the hands of various owners, until it became the property of one Jerome Nivet and his wife, Marie Baland, from whom it was purchased by the Sisters of Saint Joseph June 1, 1816.[24] On July 13 of the same year, Mother Saint John, leaving the two convents of Saint Etienne in charge, the one of Sister Gertrude and the other of Sister Ambrose, and taking with her a few Sisters, among them her assistant, secretary, and mistress of novices, went to Lyons. As extensive repairs had to be made on the Château of Yon, the Sisters occupied for a while a part of the old monastery, put at their disposal by Father de la Croix;[25] and pending the erection of a chapel, which was not completed until 1824, the ceremonies of religious reception and profession were held yearly—the first on December 19, 1816—in the ancient church of the Carthusians, or, as it was then called, the Church of Saint Bruno.[26]

[24] The sale was made by Jerome Nivet and Marie Baland to Mesdames Jeanne Fontbonne, Jeanne Poitresson-Gonet, Fleuyre Seissié, Marie Louise Parat, and Suzanne Marcoux. BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 51. The Château of Yon is still a part of the Mother House at Lyons, in the Rue des Chartreux.

[25] One of the first members of the Society of Saint Irenaeus, afterwards (1837) Bishop of Gap, and later Archbishop of Auch.

[26] RICARD, *op. cit.*, p. 184. Under this name it was restored to the Church in 1803. A band of Missionary Fathers was established in the monastery in 1806, but was dispersed by Napoleon in December 1809 (RICARD, p. 186). In August, 1816, the monastery was given by order of the Cardinal-Archbishop to the Society of Saint Irenâeus under the direction of Father de la Croix. RICARD, p. 272.

The first Mother House was rich in historical traditions, and in the memory of the saintly men, sons of Saint Bruno, who had peopled its cloisters for centuries; but the Sisters possessed little of this world's goods. Extreme poverty was for a long time their portion. To increase their revenues, they were even put to the necessity of weaving silk, which they received from the factories, and on which they spent their few spare hours.[27]

After the appointment of John Paul Gaston de Pins to the see of Lyons in 1822,[28] Father Charles Cholleton,[29] nephew of the former pastor of Saint Etienne, was named spiritual director of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the Archdiocese of Lyons. Under his wise and strong guidance for sixteen years, the Congregation grew and prospered. He assisted the Superior-General in placing the novitiate on a solid basis, and authorized a new edition of the Constitutions, which embodied the change in government and which was printed at Lyons with the approbation of Monsignor de Pins. The status of the Congregation was defined as diocesan, with the Archbishop of Lyons as its spiritual head and first Superior. Under him were the spiritual Father, appointed from his vicars, and the Reverend Mother and her council, elected by the votes of the Sisters of the diocese.

Mother Saint John Fontbonne, who had practically governed the Congregation since 1807, was retained in office as Superior-General until her resignation in 1839, in the eightieth year of her age. With infinite tact and patience, she had worked to bring about the complete unification of her Congregation. She visited all the communities, wherever located, sometimes travelling *incognito,* and everywhere winning confidence by her knowl-

[27] RIVAUX, *op. cit.,* p. 194.

[28] RICARD, *op. cit.,* p. 355.

[29] A native of Marcel de Feline, he pursued his studies at the Seminary of Saint Irenaeus in Lyons and Saint Sulpice in Paris; and after his ordination at Grenoble in 1811, was successively professor at Saint Irenaeus and director of the Grand Seminary. In 1840, he became a member of the Society of Mary at Belley. BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 68.

edge of affairs and wide experience. Her simple piety gained all hearts, and her reputation for holiness of life attracted many to the novitiate on the hill of the Chartreux. This was to her a garden of delight. No amount of fatigue or labor on her part interfered with her conferences to the novices. The favorite subject of her discourses was the love of God for them in calling them to His service. Instances are on record of obstacles removed by her from the path of young girls who wished to become Sisters, and who, but for her delicacy and forethought, would have been obliged to remain in the world.[30]

It was a subject of regret to her, that Le Puy, the "cradle of the Institute," and first home of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, remained outside of the jurisdiction of Lyons. The Sisters there had suffered much in the general shipwreck of religion, and their convents were confiscated. It was not until 1815 that they succeeded in recovering from the Prefect of the Haute Loire one half-ruined building, the Orphanage at Mont-Ferrand. The Superior-General included this house in one of her visitations; Father Cholleton, consulted with Bishop Bonald of Le Puy on the subject which he, too, had so much at heart; but the Bishop preferred autonomy for the Sisters of his diocese.

Chambéry in Savoy, and Bourg in the diocese of Belley, both owing their origin to Lyons, also became important independent centers, the separation in each case being made under the ecclesiastical superiors.[31] Sister Saint John Marcoux was the instrument chosen by Providence to introduce the Sisters of Saint Joseph into Savoy, whither she was sent from Lyons with four companions in August, 1812. Two years later, she was joined by Sister Saint Regis, her companion of the *Rue de la Bourse*. Chambéry was at that time a suffragan of Lyons, and so remained until Savoy was taken from France in 1815 by the Con-

[30] ABBÉ RIVAUX, *Vie de la Révérende Mère Saint Jean*, p. 215, 216. Grenoble 1885.

[31] Irenaeus Yves de Solle, Archbishop of Chambéry; Alexander Raymond Devie, Bishop of Belley.

gress of Vienna and given to Italy.[32] The difficulty of keeping up relations between Lyons and Chambéry under the changed conditions caused Mother Saint John to consent to the erection of a novitiate in the latter place.[33] The Holy See, by a Bull of July 17, 1817, recognizing Chambéry as a city of the Sardinian states, made it the seat of an Archdiocese;[34] and the formal separation of the communities took place, though mutual friendly relations never ceased to be maintained. Political difficulties kept the Lyons Sisters out of other parts of Italy. Fifteen Sisters, ready to leave Lyons for Rome in July 1824 at the request of Pope Leo XII, made through his Secretary of State, Cardinal Somaglia, were stopped on the eve of their departure by a letter received from the Cardinal Secretary, informing Mgr. de Pins that the French government "saw with uneasiness the establishment of the Sisters (in Rome) in which it discovered the hand of Cardinal Fesch," then a resident of Rome, and a *persona non grata* to the civil authorities at Paris.[35] The convents in Italy owe their foundation to Chambéry, which also sent laborers to Annecy.

Belley, which welcomed Mother Saint Joseph Chanay and a small community of Sisters from Lyons in 1819, was erected into a diocese in 1823 under Bishop Alexander Raymond Devie. The novitiate established there was afterwards removed to Bourg and gave rise to a flourishing community. Mother Saint Joseph, called to Bordeaux by Cardinal Donnet in 1840 in order to make a new foundation there under great difficulties and in very trying circumstances, was assured by the venerable Curé of Ars, whom she visited on her way from Lyons, that if miracles were necessary for the success of her mission, God would surely work them.[36] When this saintly man learned a few years later how

[32] JOSEPH LINS. *Catholic Encyclopedia,* article "Savoy," vol. XIII, p. 493.

[33] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 175.

[34] LINS, *op. cit.,* vol. XIII, p. 507.

[35] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.,* p. 265.

[36] LEBEURIER, *op. cit.,* p. 270.

the Sisters were prospering in Bordeaux, he promised to pray for their continued success.[37] To these prayers, no doubt, it was due that Mother Saint Joseph's administration was "signalized by wisdom, and visibly assisted by Heaven"; [38] so much so that her remarkable life drew from her biographer the explanation that the grace of God is the divine element which "diffuses in our minds lights superior to those of reason, opens our intellect to the understanding of divine mysteries." [39] He continues:

> The most lowly Christian is favored with intimate and supernatural communications from God; and daily facts prove the working of prodigies by the Creator for the good of the creature. The graces of the sacraments are standing miracles. It is then, a strange illusion and an unjustifiable mode of reasoning that directs the skeptic of the age to reject the belief in miracles, apparitions, ecstasies and extraordinary communications from God.[40]

Mother Saint John Fontbonne, in her declining years, could look back on the marvellous growth of her Congregation from its humble home in the *Rue de la Bourse* to two hundred convents which she had been instrumental in founding in thirteen departments of France.[41] The Departments of the Loire and the Rhône claimed the greater number of these; and Corsica, Herault, La Vendée, Poiteau, Aude, the Lower Alps, Creuse, Saône-et-Loire, Isère, Cote d'Or and Allier each had its community of Sisters of Saint Joseph. In 1836, the first foreign mission band left the Mother House at Lyons for America.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 318.

[38] Letter of Cardinal Donnet to Abbé Lebeurier, in *Life of Mother Saint Joseph* (Bordeaux, 1869), p. 3.

[39] LEBEURIER, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[41] *Constitutions des Sœurs de Saint Joseph de Lyon.* Preface to edition printed at Lyons in 1910, p. VIII.

CHAPTER III

BEGINNINGS OF THE CONGREGATION IN AMERICA

(1836-1839)

THE first foundation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the New World was made in the Diocese of St. Louis. This diocese in 1836 comprised all Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa and the Indian territories between the Missouri line and the Rocky Mountains. It included also the jurisdiction of western Illinois.[1] The white population of the diocese centered about Saint Louis and was largely French. On the outskirts of the vast domain were scattered numerous Indian tribes, whose forefathers of a century and a half past had been brought into contact with Christian civilization through French missionaries and explorers. Following in the wake of Father Marquette and his heroic companions, settlers from Canada had made homes in the midst of the natives on the shores of Lake Michigan and on the east bank of the Mississippi as far south as central Illinois.

The French founders of St. Louis, directing their small boats up that river from New Orleans in 1763, found many evidences of the spiritual empire planted by the sons of Saint Ignatius and the Quebec priests a century before, and kept alive at the cost of much suffering and hardship. At Sainte Genevieve, the northernmost white settlement on the west bank of the river, was stationed the aged Jesuit, Father Sebastian Louis Meurin, one of two priests in all Upper Louisiana. Left alone in 1765 by the death of Father Luke Collet, a Recollect, Father Meurin petitioned the Bishop of Quebec for assistance, and in the meantime, until the arrival of Father Pierre Gibault in 1768,

[1] JOHN ROTHENSTEINER, in *Illinois Catholic Historical Review*, article, "The Diocese of St. Louis under Bishop Rosati," vol. II, October, 1919, p. 177.

extended his ministrations to the villages of Illinois.[2] The principal of these were Kaskaskia, Cahokia and Prairie du Rocher. Six miles above Kaskaskia and perilously near the water's edge, arose the stone walls of Fort Chartres,[3] which protected under the flag of France the neighboring church of Sainte Anne and the numerous settlements that had been springing up since 1720 in the shade of the old fortress.

The transfer by France of Louisiana to Spain and the Illinois country to England took place in 1763. Thus St. Louis, legally Spanish from its foundation in the following year, became in 1770[4] part of the diocese of Havana. French and Spanish people and customs mingled under the new régime for twenty-three years; and in 1793, the newly erected diocese of New Orleans, which included all of Louisiana, claimed the growing town on the Mississippi.[5] Another change of both civil and religious authority took place when the United States purchased Louisiana in 1803, and that great territory came under the jurisdiction of Baltimore.

The see of New Orleans remained vacant until 1812. In that year, Valentine Du Bourg, a native of San Domingo, was appointed to fill the vacancy. Consecrated in Rome in 1815, he spent two years in Europe in the interests of his large diocese. It is worthy of note that while visiting Lyons, he enlisted the aid of a charitable woman, Madame Petit, who later associated herself with Mademoiselle Jaricot in a society for the support of the foreign missions.[6] Of this organization, known as the Society

[2] SHEA, *Life of Most Reverend John Carroll,* p. 545, New York, 1888.
CLARENCE WALWORTH ALVORD, *The Illinois Country,* vol. I, p. 269. Springfield, 1920.

[3] Destroyed in the summer of 1727 by an inundation of the Mississippi. ALVORD, *op. cit.,* vol. I, p. 157.

[4] Year in which Spain took formal possession.

[5] SHEA. *op. cit.,* p. 570.

[6] SHEA, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States,* vol. II, p. 361.
Cf. EDWARD JOHN HICKEY, PH. D., *The Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Its Foundation, Organization and Success,* pp. 16–22. Catholic University of America, Studies in American Church History, 1922.

for the Propagation of the Faith, Father Cholleton, spiritual Father of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, was an active member. Bishop Du Bourg brought with him to America several Vincentian Fathers, among them Joseph Rosati, destined to fill an important rôle in the history of the Church in the United States as the first Bishop of Saint Louis. That see was created by the division of the diocese of New Orleans in 1826.

Bishop Rosati needed priests and funds. In his necessity, he appealed to Father Cholleton to act as his foreign Vicar-General. The office of such a vicar was to represent the interests of the diocese to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, and to secure subjects for the missions, as appears from Father Cholleton's letter of acceptance:

> It is in quality of your vicar that I shall appear at the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, and that I shall obtain from it, I hope, abundant help. I no longer doubt but that Mgr. de Pins will send you subjects whom the Lord will deign to call in His mercy to the great work of the missions of Louisiana.[7]

Father Cholleton was also requested to procure aid for certain convents in America by directing to them the attention of young French girls who might wish to devote themselves to the "salvation of poor American souls," [8] for which purpose a knowledge of the French language was deemed an important qualification. In 1834, he first broached to Mother Saint John Fontbonne the question of sending some of her Sisters to the missions of Missouri. The presence of Father Odin in Lyons that year had directed attention anew to the foreign field.[9] Both

[7] *Father Cholleton to Bishop Rosati,* May 27, 1827. *St. Louis Diocesan Archives.*

[8] *Father Odin, C. M. to Father Cholleton. Annals of the Propagation of the Faith,* Nov. 1827.

[9] Father Odin, later Bishop of Galveston, Bishop Rosati's theologian at the Second Council of Baltimore in 1833, was commissioned to bring its decisions to Rome for approval. He spent two years in Europe, and visited Lyons before returning to America. *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.* No. 36, p. 126.

clergymen communicated with Bishop Rosati on the desirability of having a community of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the diocese of St. Louis.

Back of this project was Madame de la Rochejaquelin, a devoted friend of Mother Saint John and her Congregation. This truly Christian gentlewoman was the daughter of the Duchesse de Duras of Ussé in Touraine. Married when very young to a Vendean, the Prince of Talmont, she was left a widow at the age of seventeen, inheriting her husband's estates. On the death of her mother, she fell heir also to the family estate in Touraine. Both here and in La Vendée, she maintained schools for her tenantry under the direction of the Sisters from Lyons, and assisted Mother Saint John materially in other foundations in Angers, Poitiers, and Luçon, besides giving aid to the missions in Chambéry, Annecy, and Denmark.[10] She espoused the cause of an old and distinguished royalist family by a second marriage with Auguste, Count de la Rochejaquelin, the youngest of three brothers, two of whom, Henry and Louis, distinguished themselves in the Vendean wars against the National Convention.[11] After the Revolution of 1830 and the abdication of Charles X, political difficulties involving the confiscation of a large portion of her patrimony induced Madame de la Rochejaquelin and her husband to take up their residence in Switzerland. Here the worthy couple devoted their time and means to the relief of the poor, dispensing in charitable undertakings all that was not necessary for their own maintenance.[12]

Madame de la Rochejaquelin was a generous contributor to the Foreign Mission Society, and deeply interested in the in-

[10] *Lyons Correspondence. Archives of Mother House, Carondelet.*

[11] Henry was killed Jan. 28, 1794 at Nouailles, leading the remnant of his army. Cf. MME. DE LA ROCHEJAQUELIN, (Victoire de Donnissan), *Mémoires,* Paris 1823. Translation, Philadelphia 1826, p. 360. Victoire de Donnissan, widow of the Marquis de Lescure, married Louis de la Rochejaquelin, who died a few days before the battle of Waterloo, June 1815, at the head of a new Vendean army raised to oppose Napoleon. L. I. GUINEY, *Monsieur Henri,* p. 115. New York, 1892.

[12] *Lyons Correspondence. Archives of Mother House, Carondelet.*

JOSEPH ROSATI. FIRST BISHOP OF ST. LOUIS
1789–1843

struction and conversion of the Indians. "The reading of the admirable accounts of the Propagation of the Faith has made me shed tears over those harvest fields so ripe, but for which there are no reapers," she wrote to Bishop Rosati,[13] renewing to him an offer previously made to Fathers Odin and Cholleton of defraying the expense of establishing a community of the Sisters of Saint Joseph for missionary work in the diocese of St. Louis. This offer, she explained, was in fulfillment of a promise which she had made to God, since she had been "protected by Divine Providence in an extraordinary manner in all the difficulties and anxieties to which she had been exposed." [14] Bishop Rosati, in agreeing to the proposal, expressed the desire that some Sisters also be sent who would undertake the future instruction of deaf-mutes.[15]

As this phase of teaching had not been resumed by the Sisters of Saint Joseph after the Revolution,[16] none of the community in Lyons were familiar with the method. Sister Celestine Pommerel and Julie Fournier, a postulant, were accordingly sent to Saint Etienne to learn the sign-language from the Sisters of Saint Charles, the only community in the diocese of Lyons engaged in teaching the deaf.

From the remaining volunteers for the American mission, six were selected: Sisters Febronie and Delphine Fontbonne, nieces of the Superior-General, Sister Marguerite-Felicité Bouté, Sister Febronie Chapellon, Sister Saint Protais Deboille and Sister Philomene Vilaine. The eldest, Sister Felicité [17] was thirty-one years of age; the youngest, Sister Saint Protais, a novice, was

[13] *Letter dated June 10, 1835, Archives of Saint Louis Diocese.*

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] "I had written to Father Cholleton, Vic. Gen. of Lyons, that I would receive the Sisters of Saint Joseph into my diocese with the greatest pleasure." *Diary of Bishop Rosati,* March 5, 1836.

[16] Prior to that event, they conducted in Lyons a school for deaf-mutes. BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[17] Felicité was added to Sister Marguerite's name at the request of Mme. de la Rochejaquelin (Felicité de Duras), and by this name alone Sister was generally known.

twenty-one. Sister Philomene, Anne Vilaine, was a postulant when she offered herself for the foreign mission field. The day before the departure of the Sisters from Lyons, January 3,[18] 1836, she received the habit. Bishop Bruté of Vincennes, Indiana, who was on his way to Rome "to place himself and the new diocese of Vincennes in the heart of the Holy Father," [19] assisted at this ceremony. He entrusted the Sisters with a letter to Bishop Rosati, commending

> the good Sisters of Saint Joseph who unite their zeal and charity with that of the worthy Father Cholleton, with whom I visited them this morning and received the vows and vestitures of a large number of subjects. I was very much edified by that holy house. I could not see them go toward your shore without seizing the opportunity of expressing to you my most respectful attachment.[20]

Archbishop Gaston de Pins further recommended "this evangelical colony" [21] to the charitable solicitude of the Bishop of Saint Louis: "They will be excellent catechists, good infirmarians for the sick, perfect sacristans, and zealous instructors; and their services cannot but promote powerfully the work of God in your diocese." [22]

On the evening of January 3, the six Sisters made their farewell visit to the Archbishop and received his blessing. They were accompanied by Father James Fontbonne, brother of Sisters Febronie and Delphine, who had also volunteered for the foreign field, and was "full of zeal for the missions across the ocean." [23] They repaired the following morning for Mass and Communion to the Church of Our Lady of Fourvières, whither

[18] St. Joseph's day was observed in Lyons on this date. *Letter of Sister Delphine to Bishop Rosati, Dec. 21, 1828. Archives of St. Louis Diocese.*

[19] *Bishop Bruté to Bishop Rosati, Jan. 3, 1836. Diocesan Archives.*

[20] *Ibid.*

[21-22] *J. P. Gaston de Pins to Bishop Rosati,* Jan. 1, 1836. *St. Louis Diocesan Archives.*

[23] *Ibid.*

Mother Saint John had preceded them. They found her prostrate before the altar in her favorite shrine,[24] praying for our Blessed Mother's protection on their voyage. Thus fortified by the blessings of their superiors and the prayers of their companions, and armed with indomitable courage, the members of the little band turned their faces westward. The peril of an ocean voyage lay before them, and the unknown dangers of the American forest. Behind were home, friends, and the calm convent life hitherto undisturbed; but the missionary spirit that was agitating the Old World had penetrated their hearts, from which the hardships of the future were mercifully concealed.

Many accounts are on record of the sorrowful leave-taking; the souvenirs of medals and pictures thrust into their hands by the companions whom they were leaving; the vain attempt to steal away from their loved Superior-General, then in her seventy-seventh year, to spare her the pain of parting; the smile that broke through tears when one of the Sisters, feigning gayety, assured her fellow-travellers that they were only going "to take a little ride." [25] They left Lyons by stage, January 4, 1836, and the first pause in the "little ride" that was to end on the banks of the Mississippi was made at Paris. Here a few days were spent with the Daughters of Saint Vincent de Paul. The church of Our Lady of Victory and the Hôtel-Dieu were among the places visited in Paris. January 9 found our travellers at Havre, where they spent eight days at the hospitable home of one Madame Dodard, awaiting the sailing of the *Heidelberg*. Here they were joined by another companion of their voyage. This was a young theologian from the Grand Seminary

[24] During an insurrection in 1830, Mother Saint John braved the soldiery who had made this shrine a fortress, and insisted that a priest be allowed to remove the Blessed Sacrament. She herself carried away from the sacristy the sacred vessels and altar furnishings to save them from profanation. S. J. NORTHCOTE, *Celebrated Shrines*, p. 189.

[25] *Journal of Sister Saint Protais. Community Archives.*

of Lyons, John Escoffier, recommended to Bishop Rosati by Father Cholleton for his "piety, talents, and good strong character." [26]

On January 17, the *Heidelberg* left Havre, and from its deck the Sisters watched the receding shores of their native land, which four of them were not to see again. Few incidents marked the long journey of forty-nine days, during which they kept up as far as possible the routine of convent life. One little occurrence illustrates the spirit of personal sacrifice which animated our pioneer Sisters. On a certain day, while all were on deck, one of the band, clasping a well worn book of devotion, exclaimed with much earnestness that she could not live without it. "You could not live without it?" came in tones of gentle reproach from Mother Febronie, the Superior; and taking the treasured volume, she threw it into the ocean, the owner, meanwhile, giving no sign of her dismay. A new one was immediately produced from Father Fontbonne's ample portmanteau; but the lesson was not lost on the young religious, who after breaking the dear ties of home and country, found herself still clinging to the thumbed pages of an old book.

Many pleasant hours they spent together on deck, marvelling at the wonders of the deep and admiring its magnificence. A severe illness of M. Escoffier, which brought him to the point of death, gave them an opportunity under the direction of two American physicians returning from Europe, of exercising their skill as nurses.[27] Their destination and mission interested the passengers on board, and the captain was exceedingly kind and solicitous for their comfort. Near the Gulf of Mexico a storm arose, and for hours it seemed as if the ship must succumb to the violence of the waves or be dashed against the reefs. The *Heidelberg* weathered the storm, however, and on March 5 reached the port of New Orleans in safety. In thanksgiving, Mother Febronie promised to add to the evening prayers said

[26] *Letter of Jan. 2, 1836. St. Louis Diocesan Archives.*
[27] *Sister Saint Protais' Journal. Archives, Carondelet.*

in common the hymn *Ave Maris Stella* for the safety of those travelling on land or sea.[28]

The Sisters were met on landing by Reverend Father Moni, pastor of the Cathedral in New Orleans, and conducted to the Ursuline Convent, "where they were very lovingly received." [29] On the following day they were visited by Bishop Rosati, in company with Bishop Blanc of New Orleans.[30] "I told them (the Sisters)" recorded Bishop Rosati in his diary of March 6, 1836, "about their future home in the town of Cahokia, in a house which Father Doutreluingue has prepared for the purpose not far from the parish church, and of another now ready in the town of Carondelet."

During their two weeks' stay in New Orleans, the Sisters yielded to the wishes of their kind hostesses, the Ursulines, and disguised their religious habit whenever they went abroad, donning on those occasions the cap and heavy veil worn by widows of that time. The reason for this was that otherwise they might be taken for nuns escaped from their convent. It was a subject of no little wonder to them that such a precaution should be deemed necessary in America. The fear was not unreasonable, however, in view of the fact that two years had not yet elapsed since the Ursuline Convent of Charlestown, Massachusetts, had been plundered and burned.[31] The same disguise was observed on board the steamer, *George Collier,* on which they travelled from New Orleans to St. Louis.

They left New Orleans at noon, March 15. The other mem-

[28] This custom was observed in the Congregation until 1908, when Pope Pius X obliged the omission of all community prayers not specified in the Constitutions.

[29] *Diary of Bishop Rosati,* March 5, 1836. *St. Louis Diocesan Archives.*

[30] Bishop Rosati was in New Orleans for the consecration of Bishop Blanc November 22, 1835, and remained until the following March, cf. SHEA, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States,* vol. II, p. 672.

[31] Mother Saint Charles, Superior of the Ursulines, writing from New Orleans December 2, 1919, says: "The advisibility of Religious travelling disguised at that time (1836) was not due to any hostility at New Orleans, but to the fear of being insulted elsewhere by non-Catholics."

bers of the party besides Father Fontbonne and M. Escoffier were Bishop Rosati and Father John Timon, future Bishop of Buffalo, who had been in New Orleans in the capacity of visitor of the Congregation of the Mission.[32] The trip lasted ten days. At every landing along the route, crowds gathered on the river bank to view the steamer and return the curious gaze of the passengers. The negro children, whose kinky heads, faces like polished ebony and broad grins were much in evidence, interested the Sisters, who were now, for the first time, seeing them in large numbers.

Towards six o'clock on the afternoon of March 25,[33] the travellers landed at St. Louis. Their first visit was to the Cathedral on Second and Walnut Streets to thank God for their safe journey. The Sisters were then taken to the nearby hospital of the Sisters of Charity. Here they remained until after Easter, and had the great satisfaction of attending all the exercises of Holy Week in the Cathedral.[34]

Besides the Cathedral, an imposing building of classic design,[35] Saint Louis had no other place of worship to which the public had access except the chapel of the Jesuit College on Ninth Street and Washington Avenue.[36] There were few Catholic institutions in the diocese and these were still in their infancy.[37] Besides the Sisters of Charity, who had come from Cincinnati in 1828, there were three religious communities of women. The Sisters of Loretto had schools at Apple Creek and New Madrid, and a school and orphanage at Bethlehem near the

[32] CHAS. G. DEUTHER, *Life and Times of Rt. Rev. John Timon. D. D.* p. 55. New York, 1890.

[33] Cf. *Diary of Bishop Rosati,* March 26, 1836. *Archives of St. Louis Diocese.*

[34] *Journal of Sister Saint Protais. Archives, Carondelet.*

[35] Consecrated by Bishop Rosati, Oct. 26, 1834.

[36] WM. WALSH, *Life of Most Rev. P. R. Kenrick,* p. 31, St. Louis, 1891.

[37] Cf. *Bishop Rosati to Sisters of Charity,* Cincinnati. Letter cited by SISTER M. MCCANN, *The History of Mother Seton's Daughters* vol. I, p. 140. New York, 1917.

Barrens.[38] At Kaskaskia, the Visitandines from Georgetown were established since 1833; and in St. Louis, the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, brought from France by Bishop Du Bourg in 1818, were conducting an academy for girls in that part of the city known as French Town.[39] An orphanage for boys was in course of erection on Fourth and Spruce Streets, and pending its completion, two Sisters of Charity with a small number of orphan boys were occupying a log cottage on the edge of a thickly wooded tract at Carondelet, a small French village six miles south of St. Louis.

Though Carondelet was destined to be the future home of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, their first mission in America was at Cahokia, Illinois. This town, situated across the river from Saint Louis and three miles southeast of the center of that city, was one of the five early French villages [40] in the Illinois country, and after Kaskaskia, the oldest white settlement in the Mississippi Valley. An Indian mission known as the "Village of the Holy Family of the Caoquias" [41] existed here in 1699 under the direction of the Jesuit, Pierre François Pinet.[42] At the same time, the French inhabitants of the village were attended by priests from the Seminary of Quebec.[43] These erected the Church of the Holy Family, and received from the French government large tracts of land known as the Commons, some of which went to the support of the Church.[44] The rest

[38] A. C. MINOGUE, *Loretto, Annals of the Century,* pp. 60–84. St. Louis, 1912.

[39] Broadway near Chouteau Avenue.

[40] Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Prairie du Rocher, Saint Philippe and Nouvelle Chartres (Fort Chartres).

[41] STUART BROWN in *Illinois Catholic Historical Review,* article, "The Commons of Kaskaskia, Cahokia and Prairie du Rocher." April 1919, vol. II, p. 408.

[42] JOSEPH J. THOMPSON, in *Ill. Cath. Hist. Review,* Article, "The Illinois Missions." July 1918, vol. I, p. 66.

[43] *Ibid.* p. 66. The pastors of Cahokia were Vicars-General of Quebec. Cf. ALVORD, *op. cit.,* p. 115, ff.

[44] STUART BROWN in *Ill. Cath. Hist. Review.* Article cited, April 1919, p. 408.

was used by the villagers as common ground for farming, woodland, or pasture.

For over sixty years the mission prospered. The Indians gradually disappeared, many joining the neighboring Kaskaskias or the Delawares of Indian Territory. Fur traders and Acadian exiles [45] filtered in to swell the French and Canadian population. Reverses came with the departure of the Quebec priests and the loss of the mission property in 1765.[46] During the changes of government and of ecclesiastical jurisdiction between that date and 1826, Cahokia was frequently left without a resident pastor. The parish buildings fell into ruin, and the church, destroyed by fire in 1783, was not replaced for sixteen years. In the meantime zealous missionaries were not idle, and the names of Pierre Gibault, Paul de Saint Pierre, Gabriel Richard and Jean Olivier figure conspicuously in the parish records. The last named in 1799 built the church of upright walnut logs,[47] roofed with cypress boards on oak beams and floored with sycamore, all produced from the surrounding forests. In the beginning of Bishop Rosati's episcopate, owing to the scarcity of priests, Cahokia was hardly more than a mission station attended from St. Louis.[48]

In 1836, however, the Reverend Peter Doutreluingue, of the Congregation of the Mission, had been pastor for over five years. The Catholic population, numbering several hundred, consisted of simple, pious people, proud of their religious traditions and fond of their French customs. One of these was the blessing of bread, which occurred on the great feasts, Christ-

[45] JOS. J. THOMPSON in *Ill. Cath. Hist. Review.* Article, "The French in Illinois." July 1919, p. 27.

[46] This was sold, but recovered twenty years later, when the village court declared the sale null and void. *Illinois Historical Collections,* vol. V, p. 564.

[47] FREDERICK BEUCKMAN, *History of the Diocese of Belleville,* p. 7, Illinois, 1914. The Church is still in use as a parish hall.

[48] Bishop Rosati, writing to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, March 21, 1828, mentioned Cahokia and Carondelet as being attended by the same priest.

mas, Easter, Pentecost and the Assumption. Great quantities of small cakes, specially prepared, were heaped on decorated tables outside the altar rails, and after High Mass were blessed and distributed to the congregation. This blessing also took place before the annual expedition of the fur traders and trappers to the Rocky Mountains. Among the inhabitants were representatives of French families distinguished in the early history of the state, and a few descendants of the Indian settlers, still wearing deer-skin jackets and moccasins; but the majority of them were French-Canadian farmers. All were fairly prosperous, and industriously cultivated their small holdings. With the help of his parishioners and at the cost of much personal sacrifice, Father Doutreluingue had secured a building in the center of the village near the church for a convent and school.

Bishop Rosati selected as teachers for this school Mother Febronie Fontbonne, Sister Febronie Chapellon, and Sister Saint Protais. The remaining three, Sisters Felicité, Delphine and Philomene were to remain in St. Louis until the house in Carondelet was vacated. A small, neat cottage on the hospital grounds, facing Third Street, was put at their disposal, and for the next six months, they devoted themselves diligently to the study of English. Mother Febronie, the Superior of the Cahokia mission, was the daughter of Claude Fontbonne, only brother of Mother Saint John, and of Françoise Plénet. She was born at Bas, February 11, 1806, and entered the Congregation at Lyons, where she made her vows in 1822 at the age of sixteen. For some years previous to her departure for America, she was engaged in teaching the novices at the Mother House. She was small in stature, and of delicate constitution, little suited to the rigor of the new climate; but she had volunteered with great ardor, and her courage inspired others, compelling their love and confidence. Sister Febronie Chapellon, a native of Valbenoite, was twenty-six years of age, and is described as a woman of great personal charm, an efficient teacher,

and a devoted religious. Sister Saint Protais, the only member of her family to leave their native place at Genas, where her father, John Baptist Deboille, was in very prosperous circumstances, was ready with all the enthusiasm of her twenty-one years to devote the rest of her life to converting the Indians.

On April 7, at nine o'clock in the morning, the three Sisters, accompanied by Bishop Rosati and Father Fontbonne, left St. Louis by boat for Cahokia, where they "were welcomed as angels from heaven."[49] On the Illinois shore of the Mississippi, they found Father Doutreluingue and a numerous concourse awaiting them. The villagers had come on foot and on horseback, in carts and wagons, to meet the new comers and escort them to their home through the woods that covered the American Bottom, as the lowland between the river and Cahokia was then called. It was noon when they reached the church, to which their first visit was made. A repast was spread for them in the wide passage-way that served for a dining hall in the two-room rectory. The only recorded item of the simple bill of fare is corn bread, manifestly new and strange to their French palates. It was Bishop Rosati who conducted them to the convent, located in a four acre tract opposite the church.

Two distinct styles of building were evidently used by the Cahokians.[50] The Canadian consisted of upright logs, the inside plastered on interlaced willow twigs; the New Orleans plantation house was a large, square frame structure, one and a half or two stories high, with broad verandas under sloping roofs. The convent comprised two buildings, one of each style. The one-room log house served for kitchen and dining-room. The other supplied two class rooms on the first floor, one on each side of a broad hall running through the center of the building, and apartments for the Sisters on the story above. St. Joseph's Institute was the name given by the Sisters to their convent and school, but the villagers dignified it by the name of "The Abbey."

[49] BEUCKMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
[50] *Ibid., op. cit.*, p. 8.

Thirty day-pupils were enrolled at the opening of school, a few days after the arrival of the Sisters. To this number were soon added five boarders. The instruction given was entirely in French,[51] though the majority of the people spoke a Canadian patois rather difficult for the Sisters to understand. On May 23, to the delight of all, the Bishop returned to give confirmation to a class of twenty-nine. The Sisters made many friends among the kind-hearted Cahokians, who contributed in numerous ways to their comfort besides warmly supporting the school. This grew and prospered for eight years, though not without some drawbacks. The country was subject to almost yearly overflows of the Mississippi, and the unhealthy character of the place soon became apparent to the Sisters, who suffered much during the summer.

In June Father Doutreluingue was recalled from parochial duty by his superiors of the Congregation of the Mission; and in his place the Bishop sent Father Matthew Condamine, a zealous young priest who had been received into the diocese from Lyons in 1831. His energy and ability promised much for the future of the parish and the Abbey school. He had been scarcely two months at his new post, when he contracted a malignant fever, and all efforts to save his life were vain. His holy and lamented death occurred on the evening of August 8, in the presence of Father Doutreluingue, who by a special providence, was passing through the village, and hearing of the young priest's illness remained with him until the end.[52]

Bishop Rosati came for the obsequies when Father Condamine was laid to rest in the little cemetery beside the church. None of the Sisters were permitted to attend the Mass or funeral, all of them having been ill.[53] Sister Saint Protais was seriously so; and as she was slow in recovering her health, she was ordered back to St. Louis by Bishop Rosati in the fall, Sister Philomene,

[51] The catalogue of 1839 (Mother House, Carondelet) also mentions Latin.

[52] *Community Annals*, p. 86. Cf. ROSATI, "Obituary of Father Condamine," *Pastoral-Blatt*, Sept. 1917, p. 142.

[53] *Community Annals*, p. 57.

who had come to Cahokia to take care of the sick Sisters, remaining in her place. Early in September, Sisters Delphine and Felicité had taken up their abode in Carondelet, and with them the invalid, after a brief period spent in the Sister's hospital, was sent to remain until she was able to resume her duties.

Under the direction of a new pastor, Father John Francis Regis Loisel, the school was enlarged by the addition of a new room in 1837; and early in 1838, a pretty chapel was erected beside the convent. The means for this were supplied by Madame de la Rochejaquelin, who had sent three thousand francs the preceding year for the missions of Cahokia and Carondelet. Mother Saint John Fontbonne furnished candelabra of fine workmanship and a sweet-toned bell cast in Lyons.[54] Other generous benefactors were found among the parishioners, notably Mesdames Turgeon and Boismenu, also Madame Jarrot, in whose home near the Abbey Lafayette had received royal hospitality on his way to St. Louis in 1827. The chapel was blessed by Bishop Rosati August 17, 1838; and on the same day, Sister Saint Protais, returned from Carondelet, made her vows.

The Abbey with its three buildings now presented an imposing appearance. The school increased in numbers and popularity, and the beneficent influence of the Sisters was everywhere recognised. They entered into the simple life of the people, instructing their children, visiting their homes in sickness or trouble, and winning in return affection and confidence. They shared in the common disaster, when in the great flood of 1844, the Mississippi spread ruin and desolation, forcing them from their convent to seek a home with the Sisters by that time well established in Carondelet.

[54] Another bell, sent at the same time for the chapel in Carondelet, and still in use there, bears the inscription in French: "Presented by Mother St. John Fontbonne, Superioress of the Sisters of St. Joseph, and Sister Josephine Vacher, to Sister Delphine Fontbonne, Superioress at Carondelet. A. D. 1838.

Gedeon Morel, Caster. Lyons."

CHAPTER IV

CARONDELET, MOTHER HOUSE OF THE CONGREGATION

(1836–1839)

Six miles south of the original site of St. Louis, the River Des Peres empties into the Mississippi. At its mouth, about the year 1700, Jesuit missionaries made the first settlement in Missouri.[1] This village, supposed by some to be identical with the village of Saint Francis Xavier mentioned in the Jesuit Relations in 1706,[2] disappeared, leaving only the names of the founders. More than half a century later, in 1767, Clement Delor de Treget, a native of Guienne, France, explorer and former officer in the French army, left his post in Sainte Genevieve, to seek a home farther up the Mississippi.

Attracted by the beauty of the country north of the River Des Peres, he drew his canoe ashore where a grassy prairie about four hundred yards in width ran westward, sloping gently to a wooded plateau on the south. On the north were limestone cliffs that stretched towards the trading post established three years earlier at St. Louis. He obtained a grant of land from Louis St. Ange de Bellerive, military commandant of Upper Louisiana, and began a settlement by erecting his own house on the low ground near the river. Other Frenchmen came with their families, and in a short time, Delor's village of log cabins extended for a mile or more along the west bank of the Mississippi. The cabins were strongly built, the upright logs being sunk to a depth

[1] LOUIS HOUCK, *A History of Missouri from the Earliest Explorations and Settlements until the Admission of the State into the Union.* vol. I, p. 242. Chicago, 1908.

[2] THWAITES' *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents,* vol. 60, p. 37. Cleveland, 1896–1901. Cf. LAWRENCE KENNY, S. J. "Missouri's Earliest Settlement and Its Name." *St. Louis Catholic Historical Review,* vol. I, p. 154. St. Louis, 1919.

of four feet in the earth and dove-tailed to the heavy rafters of the roof. Barricaded with solid wooden shutters for the windows and ponderous oak doors, each house was a fortress, with loopholes on the sides. When St. Louis built a stockade for protection against the Indians, Delor and his neighbors, each the defender of his own hearthstone, laughed at the walled town and defied attack.

In 1805, the village numbered about fifty cabins with an estimated population of two hundred, and had several times changed its name. From Prairie à Catalan, named from a prominent resident, it became Louisburg; and finally, in 1796, it received the name Carondelet in honor of the last Spanish Governor-General of Louisiana, Baron de Carondelet. The St. Louisans called it Vide Poche (Empty Pocket), in the same spirit of raillery which prompted the trappers of the Wabash to fasten on St. Louis the name of Paincourt (Short-of-Bread).[3] Vide Poche is the name by which Carondelet was commonly known in 1836. For several years it had kept up a friendly rivalry with its northern neighbor; but at this date, with scarcely one-eighth the population of the larger city, it had long since given up the race for supremacy, and accepted with indifference the oft-repeated verdict of its former rival, that Vide Poche's commercial aspirations were limited to the purchase of coffee and violin strings.

Its inhabitants, now numbering several hundred, were still living in comfortable log cabins or low stone houses scattered along the Mississippi and down Stringtown Road (Virginia Avenue) which ran past the Commons. The greater number were very poor, but they led happy, care-free lives, keeping up the rural customs of their native country, and industriously cultivating the strips of land allotted in the common field to each householder of the village. Many were employed in cutting wood, which they carted to St. Louis, and disposed of for a pittance sufficient for their daily needs.

[3] EDWARDS and HOPEWELL, *The Great West*, p. 271. St. Louis, 1860.

On the high ground above the village was the log church of our Lady of Mount Carmel erected in 1818, of which Felix de Andreis had placed the first post.[4] Near it was the two-room rectory; and beyond the small graveyard adjoining the church lot on the south, stood the log cottage built in 1833 for the Sisters of Charity and their orphan boys. These left on July 22, 1836, for their new orphanage in St. Louis; and to the humble abode thus vacated came on September 12 Sister Delphine and Sister Felicité. Sister Philomene, the third Sister destined for this mission, was, as we have seen, temporarily located in Cahokia. Sister Delphine, though only twenty-three years of age and the youngest of the three, was appointed Superior by Bishop Rosati.

Beside their personal effects and some bedding, they brought little with them on the long drive from St. Louis to Carondelet, which they reached late in the afternoon. The pastor, Father Edmund Saulnier, shared with them his supper of bread and cheese, spread on a bare table, and conducted them to the convent. It faced the river, and from the front door a passage-way extended between two rooms each fifteen by twenty-four feet. An attic was reached by a ladder from the outside. Two sheds, one containing a single large room which had served as a boys' classroom, and the other used for store-room and kitchen, completed the convent buildings. With the exception of one cot, a table and a few chairs, the rooms were destitute of furniture. Two ticks, which the Sisters filled with straw and laid on the floor, provided them with beds, and the cot they reserved for Sister Saint Protais, who joined them a few days later. Father Saulnier, a good but eccentric man, accustomed to the privations of missionary life, frankly informed them that he was poor, too, and that they must provide for themselves. Kindhearted, however, in spite of his gruffness, he frequently sent them whatever he could spare from his own scanty store. Charitable neighbors came to their assist-

[4] *Pastoral-Blatt,* April 1918, p. 57. According to this authority, the material used was from the first Church in Saint Louis, torn down that year. Previous to this date Mass was said in Carondelet in private dwellings.

ance, and with the aid of these and their own ingenuity, they were able to provide the absolute necessities of life.

There was no school of any kind in the village. The convent school was announced to begin on September 19, a week after the arrival of the Sisters. Twenty pupils, girls and small boys, responded the first morning, were enrolled and dismissed, to return in the afternoon, each provided with a box, a stool, or a log of wood for a seat. Most of them were too poor to pay tuition, but agreed to bring wood or provisions instead. Madame Pourcley, more comfortably situated than her neighbors, placed her apple orchard at the disposal of the Sisters, and later sent her daughter as their first boarder. On October 1, a poor villager whose wife had just died, brought his two little girls to the convent, as he had no means of taking care of them. Sister Delphine received them, the father promising to contribute the little that he could towards their support. Two weeks later, two orphan girls from St. Louis were received.[5]

With their number thus more than doubled, the Sisters had hardly any visible means of support. The winter was severe; and though fuel was abundant, the log houses were not always impervious to wind or snow. It was necessary to use the one class room which the convent afforded as a sleeping apartment for the girls, who kept their beds in the attic during the day, and brought them down in the evening often covered with snow. The second room served in turn the purpose of sitting-room, parlor or oratory, and all dined in the passage-way. It was not uncommon to see an umbrella perched over the kitchen stove as a protection against rain or sleet, let in through the chinks in the roof.

Thus the first winter passed amid great privations; but "they were happy in their poverty," wrote Sister Saint Protais, "and Providence did not leave them without consolation."[6] Their

[5] These small beginnings later developed into the first two orphanages for girls in the Diocese of Saint Louis. WALSH, *Life of Most Reverend P. R. Kenrick*, p. 44. St. Louis, 1891.

[6] DIARY, p. 51.

ST. JOSEPH'S ACADEMY AND MOTHER HOUSE, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

(Showing terraces on the river front.)

solitude was relieved by an occasional visit from Bishop Rosati, who used to walk the six miles from the city, declaring that he was too poor to keep a horse.[7] Father Fontbonne, then stationed at the Cathedral in St. Louis, frequently came to see his sister, Sister Delphine, and observing the great poverty of the house, he sold some fine paintings which he had brought from France, and gave the proceeds to the Sisters. Bishop Rosati, on one of his visits, brought them warm mantles of broadcloth, which he cautioned them to wear always in the church. Having no chapel, they were obliged to hear Mass every day in the parish church, where they formed the choir on Sundays, and were sacristans all the time. In the latter capacity, their duties often kept them hours in the cold stone building, which, in the winter of 1836 replaced the earlier one of logs.[8]

When the warm spring days came, and the river was clear of floating ice, there were occasional visits to Cahokia, when the Sisters could summon the boatman, Joseph Courtois, to row them across the river. These visits were always duly returned, and constituted the one great pleasure of the two communities. Mother Febronie once accompanied the sisters back to Carondelet, and then insisted on returning to Cahokia alone. Arrived at the Illinois side of the river, she missed the path leading through the woods to the village, and wandered for hours without being able to find her way. As the dusk of evening approached, chilled and exhausted, she took refuge in a hollow tree. Here she remained until, hearing her name shouted by the searching party which had in the meantime set out from Cahokia with torches and hunting horns, she came out from her hiding place, and was escorted home half dead from fright and exposure.[9]

The Sisters in both Carondelet and Cahokia were encouraged

[7] *Community Annals,* p. 51.

[8] *Ibid.,* p. 91. The first Mass in the stone building was said Christmas, 1836. Sisters Delphine and Felicité decorated the altars for the occasion. As there was no sacristy, they hung up curtains of cheap print, cutting off a portion of the sanctuary to be used for a sacristy.

[9] *Community Annals,* pp. 94–95.

in May 1837 by the receipt of letters from Lyons announcing the departure from that city early in the preceding month of Sister Celestine Pommerel and Sister Saint John Fournier. These were bringing much needed help, and their arrival was expected towards the end of May. The summer months passed without any further tidings of them. Communication with Lyons revealed only the fact that they had sailed from Brest. The experience of the preceding year in Carondelet was such that it seemed as if the convent there would have to be abandoned. Bishop Rosati had deferred any arrangements for his deaf-mute school until the arrival of the two Sisters; but now, as these were believed to have been lost at sea, his cherished design also seemed not destined to be realized.

To his great joy and surprise, on September 4, two Sisters who had just reached St. Louis by boat from New Orleans presented themselves at the episcopal residence. Like those who preceded them in 1836, they wore widows' bonnets instead of veils,[10] and the Bishop was at first loath to believe that they were the long looked for teachers of the deaf. He put them to test by requesting them to converse in signs. They did so, and when the conversation seemed to amuse them, he desired it repeated to him. Sister Saint John had expressed a wish for some of the brown bread that they had last tasted in France. They brought letters for Bishop Rosati, among them the following from Father Cholleton, which rendered assurance doubly sure:

It is a very great consolation for me to present to your Lordship the two Sister teachers of the deaf-mutes for whom you asked me last year. The first, Sister Celestine is twenty-three years old and is professed; the second, Sister Saint John, a novice of twenty-two years. She will esteem herself happy to make her profession in your hands whenever you find her sufficiently disposed. They are both animated by the best dispositions, and are sufficiently capable of carrying out your noble and saintly views. Madame, the Countess

[10] This remained a custom with the Sisters in America, whenever they were travelling, until 1860.

de la Rochejaquelin, has given them 3000 francs. If you desire to thank her for it, her address is Lausanne, Switzerland.[11]

The weary and belated travellers were detained at the orphan asylum in St. Louis for several days. Bishop Rosati, evidently fond of planning surprises, sent no word of their arrival to the community in Carondelet. On September 10, the private conveyance of a Catholic physician, Doctor Rodier, who was well known to Mother Delphine and her Sisters, was secured. The Doctor was a native of San Domingo, and had brought with him from there to St. Louis a faithful colored servant, familiarly known to his patients as Black Margaret. Besides being able to manage the Doctor's horses well, Margaret possessed the additional accomplishment of speaking excellent French. She drove the two Sisters to their new home, and entertained them on the way with the history of St. Louis and its environs. They reached the convent during the evening recreation. The surprise of the Sisters there on beholding in the flesh those whom they believed dead was scarcely greater than their wonder and amusement at finding the two strangers better informed than themselves about conditions past and present in the village of Vide Poche.

The story of their journey was soon told. They had been detained at Brest until June 5, awaiting the sailing of the French frigate, *Hermione,* bound for the West Indies. There was a long delay at Havana and another at New Orleans; and the Sisters, weary of their three months at sea, knew nothing, of course, of the alarm which their failure to arrive earlier was causing on both sides of the Atlantic. To Mother Delphine they delivered Father Cholleton's letter:

You will be pleased with my promptness in sending you assistants so zealous, so well instructed, so capable of aiding you as Sister Celestine and Sister Saint John. A great number, perhaps two-thirds of the Congregation, would like to share the glory and the

[11] *Father Cholleton to Bishop Rosati,* April 5, 1837. *St. Louis Diocesan Archives.*

labor of your mission; but I did not see any other Countesses de la Rochejaquelin who wished to take on themselves the expense of the voyage and the first establishment. Sister Saint John is still a novice. When she appears to you sufficiently tried and well disposed, ask Mgr. Rosati to receive her vows himself, if his Lordship can. Follow the same course in the future for the admission of the subjects whom it will please the Divine goodness to confide to you. Our very dear Sisters will give you all the news capable of interesting you personally.[12]

There were many messages, in fact, from the dear ones in France; and when the great trunks from Lyons were emptied of their abundance—clothing for the Sisters and orphans, fine things for the chapel which as yet existed only in dreams of the future—the Sisters felt that the great heart of Mother Saint John Fontbonne was beating very near them, and that the power of her love, bridging the ocean, minimized the distance between her and her daughters in America.

The log cabin convent was now crowded, but its doors were opened wide in October 1837 to admit another occupant, Anne Eliza Dillon, the first American subject of the Congregation. Anne Dillon was the daughter of Patrick McAndrews Dillon, a wealthy Irish land-holder of St. Louis. She was born at Saint Charles, Missouri, in 1820. Her mother died when she was a child, and together with a younger sister,[13] she was placed with the Ladies of the Sacred Heart at their Academy in St. Louis, where she received an excellent education and acquired great fluency in French. It was here at school in 1836 that she met Sisters Delphine and Felicité, who during their first few months in America went every day to the Sacred Heart Convent for English lessons.[14] The young girl was drawn irresistibly to the two

[12] Letter dated April 5, 1837. *Archives of the Saint Louis Diocese.*

[13] A daughter of Patrick McAndrews Dillon became the first wife of the celebrated Captain James B. Eads.

[14] Madame Kersaint, a cousin of the Countess de la Rochejaquelin, was a religious in this convent at the time. She later introduced the Sisters of the Sacred Heart into Canada.

Sisters. Like Saint Francis of Assisi, she was attracted by poverty; and on finishing her education, she gave up everything that she possessed of this world's goods, and with the reluctant consent of her father, went to Carondelet and asked for the poor habit of a Sister of Saint Joseph. This she received on January 3, 1838, with the name of Sister Francis Marie Joseph. On the same day, Sister Philomene Vilaine made her vows. Bishop Rosati, assisted by Father Saulnier and Father Pierre Chandy, of the Congregation of the Mission, officiated at the ceremony, which took place in the church of our Lady of Mount Carmel.[15]

In the spring, the convent was enlarged by the addition of a second story, two small rooms on the west end, and broad porches on the river side. A covering of rough weather-boards changed the status of the building from a log house to the more pretentious frame dwelling. Writing of conditions in America in 1831, the Dominican missionary, Samuel Mazzuchelli, mentions two modes of building, "the Log House, that is *Casa di Travi,* which is more rustic; the other is rather fine and is called Frame House, or *Casa d'ossatura di Travi.*" [16] Though the convent might now claim to belong to the latter class, it left much to be desired in the matter of comfort, but provided the necessary room for the admission of four deaf-mute girls. All were more or less dependent on charity, and the resources of the convent were barely sufficient to provide for six Sisters, four mutes and five orphans. An addition was made to this number in the course of the year in the person of Victoire Cherbonneau, whose father, a Rocky Mountain trapper, placed her with the Sisters as a boarder. He was killed by Indians soon after while on a western trip, and his motherless little girl remained an inmate of the convent.

Bishop Rosati, aided by a few of the prominent citizens of St. Louis, set on foot a movement in the summer of 1838 to interest the Missouri Legislature in his plans for the education of the deaf. He was eventually successful in obtaining an ap-

[15] *Community Records,* 1836.

[16] *Memoirs, Historical and Edifying of a Missionary Apostolic.* Translation by SISTER BENEDICTA KENNEDY, O. S. D., p. 59. Sinsinawa, 1914.

propriation. In the meantime, the legislators petitioned Congress for a township of land on which to establish a state school for the same purpose.[17] In the Memorial addressed to Congress on this occasion, recognition is made of the work done by the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the town of Carondelet, although their small school had been in operation less than a year. "Their success has been so great, and their pupils have progressed so rapidly, that it is manifest that funds applied in founding and sustaining an asylum for the education of these unfortunate persons would advance the cause of humanity." [18]

The state school did not become a reality until 1847; but on February 13, 1839, an appropriation of two thousand dollars was granted by the legislature "for the annual tuition of such deaf and dumb children now or hereafter received in the deaf and dumb asylum at the town of Carondelet in the county of St. Louis." [19] This fund, which did not become available until the end of 1839, was to be administered *pro rata,* for such pupils only as were residents of Missouri and after they had spent six months in school.[20] Only three of the mutes who were in the convent at this time belonged to the State, Emily Johnson and Mary Musdach of St. Louis, and Teresa Bernard of Florissant. A fourth, Mary Jane Hurley, was an orphan, dependent on the charity of the Sisters.[21]

Before any part of the appropriation materialized, financial assistance came from another quarter, and with it a practical recognition of the services which the Sisters were rendering to

[17] The bill authorizing this petition was introduced Dec. 17, 1838, and adopted Feb. 8, 1839. *Missouri Session Laws,* p. 334.

[18] *Mo. Sess. Laws,* p. 334. The certified copy of this Memorial in the Carondelet Archives was furnished by the Hon. John L. Sullivan, Missouri Secretary of State in 1918–20, a former pupil of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Sedalia, Missouri.

[19] *Mo. Sess. Laws,* p. 37. This bill was repealed Feb. 16, 1847, when a bill introduced by one J. A. Broadhead of Pike Co., was approved to provide for the state education of mutes and "repeal the act of 1839." *Missouri State Laws,* p. 48.

[20] *Mo. Sess. Laws,* p. 37.

[21] *Mother Celestine to Bishop Rosati,* Oct. 29, 1839. *Diocesan Archives.*

the village. For two years they had been teaching almost gratuitously all the children who came to them. This number did not at any time exceed thirty-eight, exclusive of mutes and orphans. Early in April, the school commissioners, Messers N. Paupe and Joseph Le Blond, called at the convent and made an agreement with the Sisters which was unanimously adopted by the Board of Trustees at their meeting on April 23. This agreement stipulated for a salary to be paid the Sisters "by the Corporation of Carondelet to educate in the ordinary branches of the English and French languages the female children of the town of Carondelet, from six to eighteen years old.[22]

The salary so opportunely offered seemed a fortune to the struggling community, as indeed it must have been, with markets providing eggs three for a penny, butter six cents a pound and other commodities in proportion. Besides, their own carefully tended garden was a summer-long source of supply; and an orchard of six pear trees, planted by the pioneers in 1836 and dedicated with mock ceremony to themselves—a tree to each—was beginning to bear the luscious fruit which it continued to produce for over fifty years.[23] Had they been worldly wise they would have followed the suggestion of a practical-minded Sister and opened a bank account; but theirs was the wisdom of the Gospel, and their surplus capital was invested in small luxuries for the poor and sick whom they met on their daily rounds of charity.

The action of the trustees followed shortly after a mission given to the French settlers of Carondelet by Bishop Loras of Dubuque and Reverend Joseph Crétin, future Bishop of St. Paul. These were on their way to Dubuque from France, where the former had gone after his consecration in Mobile in December 1837. They arrived at St. Louis from New Orleans by way of

[22] Extract from the minutes of the Board of Trustees' meeting, Apr. 23, 1839. At the same meeting the services of Hamilton Michaud were accepted as "assistant school-master" for the boys. The salary given the Sisters was $375 annually.

[23] The last of these trees was destroyed by a storm in the summer of 1889.

NAZARETH COLLEGE
LIBRARY

the Mississippi in the fall of 1838, and finding further travel northward blocked by ice, they were obliged to spend the winter with Bishop Rosati. The mission lasted three weeks, during which the Bishop and his companion, on account of the poor accommodations at the tiny rectory, dined every day at the convent, which had at least the advantage in number and size of rooms. Sister Philomene was distressed at first that she could not provide plate and viands worthy of a *Monseigneur;* but she soon found out that the monseigneur was a missionary bishop, accustomed as such not only to partaking of homely fare, but to preparing it on occasion for himself. Her cook book was richer when he left by many simple recipes which he dictated, among them "bouillon without meat." The Sisters spent part of this precious time of grace making their own spiritual retreat, after which they had an outlet for their zeal in instructing and preparing for baptism a number of adults, converted during the mission.

The burden of office bore heavily on Sister Delphine under the trying circumstances depicted in the preceding pages. When her term of three years expired in August 1839, she begged to be relieved, and was appointed as an assistant teacher in Cahokia. The American population was increasing there, and before she took up her new duties, she spent some time studying English with the Visitandines at Kaskaskia. She was succeeded by Mother Celestine Pommerel, whose appointment by Bishop Rosati as Superior of the Congregation in the diocese of St. Louis was made subject to the approval of the authorities at the Mother House in Lyons.

CHAPTER V

ST. JOSEPH'S ACADEMY. FIRST MISSIONS IN ST. LOUIS

(1840–1846)

MOTHER CELESTINE, MARIE POMMEREL, was born April 7, 1813, at Feillan, in the Department of Ain, France. She was the eldest of four children (three daughters and one son) of André Pommerel and Louise Pommiers. This deeply religious couple possessed wealth and culture, and gave their children every advantage which these could procure. Marie was educated by the Sisters of St. Charles at Mâcon, and became greatly attached to her teachers. She early felt the call to a religious life; but in following out her vocation, preferred to join a Sisterhood more distant from her home. Following the advice of a Jesuit confessor, she entered the Congregation of Saint Joseph at Lyons. Here she received the habit May 19, 1831, and made her vows two years later.

During her novitiate she had often expressed a desire to devote her life to missionary work in the New World. Sisters were wanted for the St. Louis Diocese, and Sister Celestine was one of the first selected from the volunteers for the distant mission. In view of the work to be done there among the deaf-mutes, she was detained a year in France to perfect herself in the method of teaching them. Her pious parents, grieved at the prospect of her leaving France, endeavored by every tender means in their power to dissuade her from offering herself for the foreign field; but when she remained firm in her resolution, they resigned themselves to the separation which they felt would be final.

Mother Celestine is described as "a model of womanly grace, slightly above middle height, of a dignified bearing, fair complexion, with broad, high forehead, blue-gray eyes, large but

well-formed mouth and firm chin. Her countenance was open and serene, her voice sweet and pleasing. Her simplicity and gentleness won all who came in contact with her." [1] With gentleness she combined firmness, and with sweetness, great strength of character and rare executive ability. She was in her twenty-seventh year when placed in charge of the Congregation in America, which numbered after three years, only eight professed members and three novices. Four of the former were in Cahokia, the others in Carondelet, where they were still poorly housed.

The "main building" of the convent was a two-story log house (weather-boarded), with two rooms on the ground floor, one of which served as office, sitting room, or oratory for Sisters and children. The upper story, reached by a ladder from the outside, contained two sleeping rooms. In the rear on the ground floor were two small apartments, study and class rooms combined. All this belonged to a vanishing era. A spirit of progress was invading the old French town.

Writers of Carondelet history divide it into ancient and modern periods, distinguished one from the other by the different styles of architecture in vogue at different times. The modern period was ushered in by the building of brick houses in the early forties of the nineteenth century, though many of the log huts had already given place to others of native stone. One of the first of these modern houses was commenced by Mother Celestine during 1840, when on a ground story of stone, she ran up two of brick. It was north of the frame structure, which it adjoined, and consisted of a parlor, infirmary and girls' refectory on the first floor, chapel and study hall connected by folding doors on the second, and dormitories on the third. Mrs. Mullanphy of St. Louis was a generous contributor to this, the nucleus of St. Joseph's Academy, which was at first known as "Madame Celestine's School."

It was ready for use in the spring of 1841 and formed the

[1] *Community Annals*, p. 332.

MOTHER CELESTINE POMMEREL
1813–1857
(From an old painting in Carondelet. The form of habit is that originally worn by our Sisters in France and in America.)

north wing of the large convent completed by successive additions during the next few years. Between 1841 and 1846, a parallel wing went up on the south, and a central one connecting these two replaced the frame building removed to another part of the grounds.[2] A large building loan was furnished to Mother Celestine in 1842 by Archbishop Kenrick, then coadjutor of St. Louis; and a block of ground next to the convent property on the south, bought at public auction by Bryan Mullanphy, was given to the Sisters on December 23 of the same year as a Christmas present.

In the fall of 1840, with prospects of a new and comfortable convent in the very near future, seven boarders were received. These were Eliza Ruhland, Mary Anne Prigott, Elizabeth Le Beau, and Mary Eliza McKenney, of St. Louis; Elizabeth Coffin, daughter of Major Coffin of Jefferson Barracks; Ophelia Butler of Cahokia, and Adelia Flandrin of Carondelet. All were large girls of seventeen years or over except Mary Eliza McKenney, then in her ninth year. Her mother, the widow of a Westmoreland, Virginia, gentleman, wishing the child to acquire a French education, was recommended to Mother Celestine by Bishop Rosati. Mary Eliza remained six years with the Sisters, kept in close touch with them until her marriage in 1853 and subsequent removal to Vincennes, and has left interesting memoirs in manuscript of the early days of St. Joseph's Academy.

Our first Sisters in America live again in the pages of these memoirs, all "lovable women, their sweet simplicity of manner captivating our hearts, and so attaching us to them that when our yearly vacation came, we grieved at parting from them as if it were forever."[3] As they pass in review, the idolized Mother Celestine, sweet Sister Felicité, Sister Saint Protais, "always finding excuses for our failings," Sister Philomene,

[2] In the winter of 1845, before its removal, this was partially destroyed by fire. The loss was defrayed by a collection taken up Dec. 22 in the Cathedral of St. Louis.

[3] *Memoirs of* ELIZA MCKENNEY BROUILLET, p. 25. *Manuscript in Carondelet Archives.*

whose fairy tales were the delight of her small charges, grave and silent Sister Saint John, and the three who came on rare and pleasant visits from Cahokia, it is easy to appreciate the responsive chord which they awakened in the hearts of their pupils, one of whom, no doubt, spoke for all when she wished for

> the tongue of a Chrysostom, or the loving heart of Saint John and a diamond-pointed pen to pay a fitting tribute to these great souls—great in their humility and self-sacrifice; great in their zeal for the well being of those under their care; great in their voluntary and lifelong exile in a strange land for the love of their Divine Master.[4]

The winter of 1840–41 was severe, and all suffered much, for the poor house, according to the memoirs,

> offered a good target to the cold winds that held high carnival in our dormitory, especially during snow storms; and many a night did those dear, self-sacrificing pioneers spend the time shaking the snow from our beds. We had only to speak, and we would have been taken to our homes, where comfort reigned, and want was never known; but St. Joseph's had a charm for us that was not easily broken, and we felt a pleasure in sharing the privations of our Sisters.[5]

The commencement exercises of 1841 were held in the new convent. The boarders had increased to twelve; and the pupils all told numbered ninety-four. The vacations were short, as school closed the first week in August and reopened in September; "still no vacation was permitted to pass by without our going to spend days with the Sisters before returning for the next term." [6]

The language of the school was French, in which most of the instruction was given, Sister Francis Marie Joseph, or as she was called, Sister Mary Joseph, being at first the only English

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

teacher. A homelike atmosphere was cultivated, and the only discipline was one of love. Mother Celestine's cheery morning visit to the study hall was looked for eagerly each day; and the greatest penalty inflicted for wrong doing was the look of sorrow which she cast upon the culprit, whose offence was not likely to be repeated.[7] On free days there were excursions to the Red Bridge over the River Des Peres, always in company with the Sisters; or to the woods near "Grandfather" Poupeney's, where a merry crowd enjoyed the freedom of his orchard and the fresh loaves baked by Madame for "her children." There were weekly errands of charity when some privileged girl was allowed to carry for Sister Felicité or Sister Saint John the small hamper containing medicine or soothing cordials to the poor and sick.[8] The great feast loved by all was Corpus Christi, with its annual procession from the church through the cemetery and convent grounds to the altar erected on the edge of the forest.

An event of great consequence in the simple life of those early days was the finding of water in the spring of 1841 by workmen engaged in digging a well on the convent grounds. When the announcement was made—fortunately at recess—that a natural vein had been struck on a bed of rock over a hundred feet below the surface, a lively student demonstration followed, and freshly-starched sunbonnets went up in the air with hurrahs for the new well. When in the following year, the Sisters were able to purchase a horse and cart, the only conveyance which they could afford for many years, the happiness of their pupils was complete. The latter named the horse Jacquet, and gave to the cart the "high-sounding title of gig when it was used by the Sisters; on all other occasions it was a cart." [9]

A sweet and touching incident is that of little Mary Byrnes. Her father, a widower, a man of good education but in reduced circumstances, was employed as man-of-all-work about the con-

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 59.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 90.

vent, and his only child, Mary Josephine, six years old, was taken by the Sisters to be cared for and educated. She was soon a favorite with all, and so loved the Sisters that, wanting to be like them, she begged to be dressed as they were. The older girls added their entreaties to hers, and pleaded her cause so effectually, that Sister Felicité and Sister Saint John fashioned for her the coveted dress, Sister Philomene contributing the rosary and cincture. A severe attack of croup soon after resulted in the death of the angelic child; and at the request of her heart-broken father, she was laid to rest in the little habit that she loved.

That Mother Celestine was an advocate of social service in a most practical form was demonstrated one cold night in midwinter, when hearing cries of distress, she rang the convent bell, summoning the community and the larger girls to accompany her to the river bank, where the crew of a wrecked steamer, the *Europa,* were signalling for help. Warm wraps, restoratives and bandages were quickly gathered up, and the party set out, reaching the place in time to be of great help to the rescuers. Two hundred passengers—all on board—were saved and housed by the villagers over night. Thirty women and girls were sheltered at the convent until the following afternoon. The academy girls felt doubly repaid for their loss of sleep that night, when, among the transients whom they escorted home, they discovered the sixteen-year-old "Fat Girl" of a travelling troupe. The celebrity slept on a pallet, for the convent beds were all too small; and in the morning she held a levée in one of the class rooms.[10]

The happy convent life at Saint Joseph's was disturbed in October, 1842, by the Angel of Death, who took from the midst of those who loved her well, Sister Mary Joseph Dillon. First fruit of the sweet example given by our early Sisters in their poverty, she was the first full sheaf garnered by the Reaper from the tiny field sown at Carondelet. Her death was the result of

[10] *Ibid.,* p. 95.

a cold contracted one day when she and several of the Sisters were returning from Cahokia. They were overtaken by a heavy rain for which they were unprepared. Sister Mary Joseph was always delicate, and her cold developed into quick consumption. All that loving care could do failed to restore her waning strength; and on October 30, 1842, she rendered up her pure soul to its Maker. The village carpenter made her pine coffin, which the Sisters deftly covered with black cloth, and lined with snowy white. After Vespers on a Sunday afternoon, the Sisters, followed by her white-haired, sorrow-stricken father and her young sister, bore her to her last resting-place in the little cemetery beside the village church. The chapel windows looked out upon the plain white cross that marked her grave; and soon a path was worn across the grassy plot that lay between it and the convent.

Sister Mary Joseph's place as English teacher in the academy was taken by Sister Mary Rose Marsteller, a native of Alexandria, Virginia, and a resident for many years of Baltimore. Sister Mary Rose, though still a novice, was in her thirty-first year, a woman of mature judgment and ripe experience. Possessed of superior talent and ability, she had received a splendid education, was an accomplished linguist and musician, and her assistance proved invaluable to Mother Celestine. Another encouragement to the latter at this time was the interest taken in St. Joseph's by Father Fontbonne, who was pastor in Carondelet, and also director of a boys' Seminary established in the parish, his appointment being one of the first official acts of Bishop Kenrick.[11] In the last week of December, 1841, Bishop Kenrick arrived in St. Louis as coadjutor to Bishop Rosati, then in Rome.[12] With his initial visit to the academy in January 1842, began the friendship between the Congregation and that distin-

[11] *Pastoral Blatt,* "Vater Saulnier und seine Zeit," April 1918, p. 58.

[12] Bishop Rosati did not return to St. Louis. He died in Rome, September 25, 1843.

guished prelate which was to last over fifty years, and which has made his name a household word among the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Vide Poche was assuming an intellectual atmosphere in 1842 and 1843, and seemed destined to be a center of education, especially when a few years later the Diocesan Seminary was located there. Another change came over the face of the village when well-to-do St. Louisans began building there fine country homes. One of these was Louis G. Picot, a native of Richmond, Virginia, who had built up a lucrative law practice in St. Louis. He secured a large tract of land adjoining the convent property on the east overlooking the river; and indulging his artistic tastes, erected a great stone house, its battlemented turrets giving it the appearance of a medieval stronghold. The central tower, rising above the surrounding trees, commanded a river view of twenty miles, and was the first object seen by boatmen approaching the city from the south. Picot's Castle was the name given to this beautiful home. The little daughters of Mr. Picot attended the convent school, and his fine park was thrown open to the Sisters and their pupils, who duly appreciated the liberty of roaming at will through the grounds of both convent and castle.

While affairs were thus progressing favorably in Carondelet, the mission at Cahokia met with disaster. The winter of 1843–4 was unusually severe in the Mississippi Valley, with frequent snow storms in the northwest. The spring rains were the heaviest that old inhabitants could remember. The Mississippi rose to a great height, and a raging flood swept the lowlands along the Missouri and Illinois shores in May. By the first week in June, entire villages, including Kaskaskia and Cahokia, were under water. Mother Febronie and her Sisters took refuge in the second story of the convent, where they watched the little church and their own small chapel almost disappear, and in momentary fear of drowning, waited, praying for relief.

Volunteers among the river captains were called for in the meantime by the Mayor of St. Louis, Bernard Pratte, and boat

after boat set out to the rescue of the Illinois sufferers, plying inland over submerged fields of grain. On one of these boats, Mother Celestine herself, accompanied by Father Fontbonne, embarked, fearful for the safety of the Sisters. The latter were rescued through a second story window of the convent and brought back to Carondelet. All had suffered much from exposure, especially Mother Febronie, whose frail constitution seemed hopelessly shattered. She was seized with a lingering illness, which caused her intense suffering. After four months of patient endurance, she was allowed, on the advice of physicians, to return to France. Accompanied by Sister Febronie Chapellon, she left St. Louis in October 1844.

The Sisters did not return to Cahokia until 1847. Though the water gradually subsided, the houses remained damp and unhealthy, and everywhere were stagnant pools that bred disease. Father Loisel returned for a short time; but consumed by a wasting fever, he came back to St. Louis, where his death occurred May 10, 1845, at the home of his sister, Mrs. Papin. Cahokia was then left without a resident pastor for two years.[13]

In the interval between 1844 and 1847, the Sisters from Carondelet assumed charge of three institutions in Saint Louis, their first in that city. Two of these, St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum and St. Vincent's parochial school were permanent, and after seventy-five years of existence, are still flourishing. The third, though first in point of time, was short-lived, but produced some lasting fruit. This was a school for Catholic colored girls established by Father Augustus Paris under the auspices of Bishop Kenrick. It was opened on February 5, 1845, in a three-story brick building on Third and Poplar Streets. Sister Saint John Fournier, Sister Antoinette Kinkaid and Sister Saint Protais Deboille constituted the first teaching staff. The curriculum included the elementary branches, with French and plain ornamental needle work.

The school soon numbered one hundred girls,[14] the daughters

[13] BEUCKMAN, *History of the Diocese of Belleville*, pp. 5, 6.

[14] *Annals*, p. 279.

for the most part of free negroes. The children of the Catholic slave population were instructed in Catechism after school and on Sundays. While no law as yet existed in Missouri prohibiting the education of this class, there was a strong prejudice against it on the part of those who feared the influence of abolition literature on slaves able to read it.[15] Many indulgent masters, however, taught their negroes to read and write, and these were ready and willing to patronize the school, a few, indeed, sending their slaves.

A lively interest was manifested in the education of these children by Bishop Kenrick, and also by Right Reverend Edward Barron, for several years Vicar-Apostolic of the Liberian colony in Africa. Bishop Barron came to St. Louis in 1845, and in company with Bishop Kenrick, frequently visited the school, encouraging teachers and pupils. The following is a portion of a letter from one of the latter written into the annals of the Sisters in Carondelet:

> We felt at home and were happy, because the time and attention of the Sisters was all our own, and there was no one to tease us. Archbishop Kenrick often visited us, and when Bishop Barron came to St. Louis, the Archbishop brought him to see us. Father Paris, who was the chief organizer of the school, visited us at least once a week. He would hear our lessons and note our improvement. If he called during sewing class, he looked at each girl's work. When he brought visitors to the school, he never failed to tell them in our presence that we were his children. This pleased us very much. Father Renaud usually said Mass on week days in the Sisters' chapel, and as many of us as had time assisted at that Mass. For a time, Father Benedict Roux gave us instructions in Christian Doctrine twice a week in our class room.[16]

Then follows an account of an entertainment given by the pupils on the eve of Father Roux's departure for France. Va-

[15] EUGENE MORROW VIOLETTE, *A History of Missouri*, p. 296 New York, 1918. HARRISON A. TREXLER, *Slavery in Missouri*, 1804–1865 p. 83. Baltimore, 1914.

[16] *Annals*, p. 283–4. Signature and date not preserved.

rious gifts were made to him by the grateful children, some presenting fruit and flowers, and one, Rosalie Jacques, eighteen years of age, a surplice which she herself had made and embroidered. This school was giving much promise of success, when obstacles were placed in the way of its continuance by the civil authorities,[17] and it was given up in the spring of 1846, the Sunday-school classes only being carried on as usual.[18]

In the meantime, in November, 1845, a parochial school was begun by the Fathers of the Congregation of the Mission in their parish of St. Vincent de Paul, of which Reverend Thaddeus Amat, future Bishop of Los Angeles, was pastor. Mother Celestine, being appealed to for teachers, appointed Sister Delphine as Superior of the mission, with Sister Mary Frances Nally and Sister Martha Bunning as her assistants. This was the only parish school then in St. Louis,[19] and was known at first as the Immaculate Conception School. The girls and small boys were taught by the Sisters in a building on Seventh street, which was soon too small, and a rented house on Tenth and Marion Streets was used for the primary classes. The large boys were in charge of lay teachers until the coming of the Christian Brothers in 1850. By that time, a new brick building was ready for the boys, and a lot had been donated to the Sisters by Elizabeth Soulard, a wealthy and charitable woman of the parish, for a girls' school, the one in use being overcrowded. To the school erected here a few years later, Archbishop Kenrick was a large contributor, as was also Father Aloysius Parodi, of the Con-

[17] *Records of St. Louis Diocese,* I, 221. A. D. 1845.

[18] The existing prejudice reached a climax in the following year. On Feb. 16, 1847, a bill passed in the Missouri Legislature provided that "no person shall keep or teach any school for the instruction of negroes in reading or writing" under penalty of a "fine not exceeding $500 or imprisonment not exceeding six months or both fine and imprisonment." *Mo. Sess. Laws,* 1847, pp. 103–4, Sections, 1–5.

[19] A parish school was opened in 1843 by the Sisters of Charity, but it soon developed into a private seminary for girls, known as "Sister Olympia's school." WALTER J. HILL, *History of St. Louis University,* p. 64. St. Louis, 1879.

gregation of the Mission. It owed much of the success which attended it from the beginning to Father Uhland, whose zeal for education was equalled only by his charity to the poor and the orphans.

In the summer of 1846, Mother Celestine was again called on by Bishop Kenrick for members of her community to take charge of the boys' orphanage on Third and Walnut Streets, from which the Sisters of Charity, on their affiliation with the Daughters of Vincent de Paul in France, had been withdrawn. Sister Saint John Fournier was placed in charge of this house, and with her were Sister Antoinette Kinkaid, Sister Teresa Struckhof, and Sister Seraphine Coughlin.

The Sisters of Saint Joseph had now spent ten years in the United States—years for the most part of struggle against difficulties and discouragements. Their mission field was confined to Carondelet and St. Louis. In the former, they were conducting an academy of thirty boarders, and their day schools numbered eighty pupils. They were also caring for six mutes and nineteen orphan girls. The school in St. Vincent's parish numbered one hundred and twenty pupils, and the orphanage, seventy-seven boys.[20] The Congregation was still small, but steadily increasing in numbers. It had lost a few members by death, and two had gone back to France.

It was hoped that these two would return to St. Louis; but Mother Sacred Heart Tezenas, who had succeeded Mother Saint John Fontbonne in the government of the Congregation at Lyons, being herself in great need of Sisters for her numerous missions, did not deem it wise to send them or any other Sisters from France. The novitiate in Carondelet was receiving young American girls better adapted physically to the severe climate, and better prepared by their knowledge of the language and customs of the country to take up the work of education, which, it was evident, would be their principal occupation. Under these circumstances, the authorities in Lyons by mutual agreement with

[20] *Records, Mother House,* pp. 231, 269.

those of St. Louis recognized the autonomy of the Congregation in Carondelet. Neither distance nor the lapse of time, however, weakened the bond of affection engendered by early association and a common origin which bound Carondelet to Lyons, and across the dark period known as the French Revolution, linked it with Le Puy and its holy traditions.

CHAPTER VI

FOUNDATIONS IN PENNSYLVANIA (1847), MINNESOTA (1851), CANADA (1851), VIRGINIA (1853), NEW YORK (1854)

In the spring of 1847, Mother Celestine made the first foundation of the Congregation outside the diocese of St. Louis. This was in Philadelphia, at the request of Right Reverend Francis Patrick Kenrick. The latter, while on a visit to his brother, Peter Richard, Bishop of St. Louis, in the fall of 1846,[1] went to Carondelet, and requested of Mother Celestine a community of her Sisters to take charge of St. John's Orphan Asylum in his episcopal city. From this, as from the one in St. Louis, the Sisters of Charity had been recalled in the summer of 1846 by their Superior, Father Deluol.[2]

It was only after much persuasion that Mother Celestine consented to this request. The need of Sisters for the home missions was great and the Congregation still small. Moreover, the distance of the new field and the inconveniences of travel made frequent communication with the Mother House difficult, and, at some seasons of the year impossible.[3] The Bishop would take no refusal, however; and he left St. Louis with the promise that Sisters would be sent to Philadelphia after the ceremony of profession in the spring, when several novices were to make

[1] Bishop Francis P. Kenrick was favorably impressed with conditions in St. Louis. He wrote in his *Diary* of Sept. 22, 1846 (p. 241): "Religion here is very vigorous. It is manifest in its works: a hospital, a university, schools and other institutions."

[2] CHARLES G. HERBERMANN, *The Sulpicians in the United States*, p. 221, New York, 1916.

[3] The ordinary means of transportation between St. Louis and Pittsburg were steamboats on the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, and these were often icebound for weeks, or retarded by low water.

their vows. This ceremony took place on April 11, Bishop Barron, assisted by Father Anthony Thibaudier, officiating in the absence from St. Louis of Bishop Kenrick. Two of the newly professed Sisters, Sister Mary Joseph Clark, a native of Washington County, Missouri, and Sister Elizabeth Kinkaid of St. Louis, were selected for the Philadelphia mission. With them were appointed Sister Mary Magdalen Weber, who had entered the Congregation in 1843 from Conewaga, Pennsylvania; and as Superior, Sister Saint John Fournier.

Mother Saint John, who later became an important factor in the development of the Congregation in Philadelphia, was the daughter of Jean Cloude Fournier and Marie Rambeau, and was born November 13, 1814, at Arbois, France. She entered the novitiate at Lyons, receiving the habit there on June 16, 1836. While still a postulant, she was sent with other Sisters from Lyons to Saint Etienne to study the sign-language, and was chosen in 1837 to accompany Mother Celestine to Carondelet. The new climate told severely on her constitution; and during her novitiate, she suffered much from the hardships to which the Sisters were exposed in their log-cabin convent. Her ardent disposition, and her great desire to be of service caused her to hope that she might be admitted to her profession of vows before the expiration of her two years of novitiate; and she twice petitioned Bishop Rosati to this effect.[4] It was a great trial to her, when, in view of the uncertain state of her health, and the short time that she had spent on the trying American mission, her superiors thought it advisable to postpone rather than to anticipate the time of her profession; but she looked on this as a means given her for preparing more worthily for the final sacrifice.[5] On the feast of her patron, St. John the Evangelist, December 27, 1838, Bishop Rosati, who was attended on this occasion by Reverend Hilary Tucker, received her vows in the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

[4] *Sister St. John to Bishop Rosati.* Letter of December 9, 1837, in *St. Louis Diocesan Archives.*

[5] *Ibid.*

On the advice of physicians, and with the consent of Bishop Rosati, she spent part of the following year with the Ladies of the Sacred Heart at their convent in the city; and she profited by this occasion not only to recuperate her strength but to acquire a more thorough knowledge of the English language. Until 1845, she was employed in Carondelet, where, besides instructing the deaf-mutes, she assisted with the French classes in the academy. At the time of her appointment to Philadelphia in 1847, she had been for a year in charge of the boys' orphanage in St. Louis. In this capacity, she was replaced by Sister Felicité Bouté.

On the evening of April 15, 1847, the four Sisters left St. Louis. News of the victory of General Scott at Vera Cruz had just reached the city, and the missionaries, on their way to the boat, passed through illuminated streets and scenes of general rejoicing quite in contrast to their own feelings at parting from Sisters and friends to find a new home among strangers. They were accompanied from St. Louis by Reverend Joseph Antony Lutz, former Vicar-General of St. Louis, who was on his way to Europe.[6] After a wearisome journey of nearly three weeks by water and stage, they arrived on May 5 at Philadelphia. Before entering the city, they disguised as far as possible their religious dress. This they continued to do for some time whenever they appeared in public, fearing to excite a renewal of the anti-Catholic feeling which, only three years before, had caused bloodshed in Pennsylvania.[7] The diocese had passed through an ordeal of religious persecution, from which, owing to the indomitable courage of Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick, it had emerged strong and vigorous.[8] It numbered at this time one hundred thousand Catholics in a total population of one million,[9]

[6] Father Lutz, meeting Father Melcher, V. G., of St. Louis in New York, was dissuaded from going to Europe, and remained in the East.

[7] J. J. O'SHEA, *The Two Kenricks*, p. 126. Philadelphia, 1904.

[8] J. G. SHEA, *A History of the Catholic Church Within the Limits of the United States*, p. 148. New York, 1892.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

and was supporting several parochial schools in addition to boarding schools for small boys and academies for girls, all in charge of religious communities. There were also two orphan asylums, both until 1846 under the care of the Sisters of Charity.

St. John's Orphan Asylum, originally located in a small house on Locust Street near Fourth, owed its foundation to an association of laymen, formed in 1829 for the purpose of caring for a few orphaned children of St. John's parish. A charter was drawn up by Reverend John Hughes, future Archbishop of New York, then stationed at St. John's Church. A board of managers was incorporated under the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania; and in 1833, the association secured a large building on Chestnut Street known as the Gothic Mansion.

To this place, Mother Saint John and her companions were conducted on their arrival in Philadelphia; and here on the following day, they were visited by the Board of Managers, and placed in possession of the institution. It contained forty boys, and had been since the preceding summer in charge of two zealous young women, who had unselfishly offered themselves for this work, and who now relinquished it into the hands of the Sisters. The latter had some opposition and many insults to endure from those still under the influence of bigotry. Their Catholic friends, however, were numerous, and the fruit of self-sacrificing labor on their own part was soon evident. Before many months had passed, three postulants presented themselves for admission into the Congregation, Eliza Carroll, Margaret Lovett and Mary Meyer. The last named was one of the two young women mentioned above. Before the end of the year 1847, all were invested with the habit by Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick in the chapel of St. John's Asylum in Philadelphia, and received the names respectively of Sister Jane Frances, Sister Salome, and Sister Appolonia. At the time of their profession in October, 1849, Mother Celestine made her first visit to the Eastern houses, which then included, besides the orphanage, St.

Patrick's parochial school in Pottsville, and St. Joseph's Hospital, opened the preceding June in Philadelphia.

The last named institution, though it remained under the direction of the Sisters of St. Joseph for only ten years, is interesting as it is the first hospital of which they took charge in America. It was the result of efforts made by the zealous Jesuit, Father Barbelin, for the relief of Irish immigrants who were coming into Philadelphia in large numbers, many of them suffering from fever. The building first secured was a small frame house situated in a beautiful plot of ground on Girard Avenue between Sixteenth and Seventeenth Streets. It was enlarged the following year by the purchase of an adjoining piece of property on which stood a two story house. The two buildings were then connected by a frame arcade, thus increasing the capacity of the hospital, which during the first year, accommodated one hundred and eighty-five patients. Doctor Horner, head surgeon at that time of the city hospital, was largely instrumental in the foundation of Saint Joseph's. He remained its friend and benefactor during his life, and at his death in 1853, bequeathed to it all his surgical instruments and many valuable books. Besides Doctor Horner, the staff numbered two resident and five attendant physicians.

Four Sisters were assigned to hospital duty, and Mother Saint John Fournier, as Superior, was obliged to divide her attention between hospital and orphanage until Mother Celestine relieved the situation in June 1850 by sending from Carondelet Sister Delphine Fontbonne and Sister Martha Bunning. The former was made Superior at the orphanage, which until 1854 was also the novitiate. Many opportunities were given to Mother Saint John in the cramped quarters at the hospital of practicing the mortification to which she had become accustomed during her novitiate in Carondelet. On one occasion it was discovered that she had given up her bed to a fever patient, and slept on boards over which a few coverlets had been thrown. To a Sister who remonstrated with her, she replied, that a Sister of Saint Joseph

FONTBONNE COLLEGE

(Plan of new buildings to be erected at Hill Crest, St. Louis County, Mo.)

should forget her own comfort in remembering the hard wood of the Cross. Her charity towards the sick poor was boundless, and she soon won the love and esteem of all. Her stay at the hospital was short, however. In August 1851, she was recalled to Carondelet, whither she went accompanied by Sister Appolonia. Mother Celestine, responding to a petition of Bishop Peter Richard Kenrick in favor of Right Reverend Joseph Crétin, of the newly erected diocese of St. Paul,[10] was preparing to establish in the latter's episcopal city, the first mission of the Congregation in Minnesota. Of the pioneer band that went there in the late fall of 1851, Mother Saint John was a member, but in the spring of 1853, at the request of Right Reverend Bishop Neumann,[11] she was sent back to Philadelphia. In the meantime, a new parochial school was opened, St. Philip's, and the orphan boys, one hundred in number, had been removed to a new building in West Philadelphia. They were in charge of Sister Agnes Spencer, Sister Delphine having gone to Toronto, Canada, where a foundation was made in the fall of 1851.

This mission was the result of a visit made in the summer of that year by Right Reverend Amandus de Charbonnel to Bishop Kenrick of Philadelphia. Bishop de Charbonnel, a native of Lyons, was a friend of the Fontbonne family, and he requested that Sister Delphine be allowed to found a house of the Congregation in his diocese of Toronto. Early in October, Sister Delphine, Sister Martha Bunning, Sister Alphonsus Margery and Sister Mary Bernard Dinan, the two last named from the Philadelphia novitiate, left for Canada. They were accompanied by Reverend James Fontbonne, who had severed his connection with the St. Louis diocese, and after some months in Philadelphia, was on his way to France.[12] The first house of the Sisters in Toronto was an orphan asylum, later known as the House of Providence; and in April 1852, Sister Martha Bunning was

[10] The See of St. Paul was erected July 19, 1850. Bishop Crétin, consecrated at Belley, France, January 31, 1851, reached St. Paul July 21, 1851.

[11] Successor to Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick in the See of Philadelphia.

[12] Father Fontbonne died at Changy, France in 1886.

appointed Superior of another orphanage in Hamilton. In the meantime, on March 19, 1852, two novices were received in Toronto, the ceremony taking place in St. Michael's Cathedral. They were Sister Mary Joseph McDonnel, and Sister Mary Frances McCarthy, both natives of Ireland. Three parochial schools, St. Patrick's, St. Paul's and St. Michael's, were placed in charge of the Sisters by the fall of 1853, and on the inauguration of a new mission in Amherstburgh in the same year, Sister Teresa Struckhof was sent from St. Louis as Superior.

Though Mother Delphine had begged for a larger number of recruits for Canada, Mother Celestine was not able at that time to send more, the demand made upon the Mother House in Carondelet being greater than she could supply. Early in 1853, she had complied with a request of Bishop Whelan of Wheeling, Virginia, and sent to that city a community of four Sisters to commence a private hospital, there being none in Wheeling under Catholic auspices. A rented house which the Bishop had procured for the purpose was put in readiness by the Sisters; but on the eve of their taking possession, the owner insisted on cancelling the contract which she had made, affirming that she could not permit her house to be used by Catholic Sisters. She had understood that the occupants were to be sisters of the same family, not members of a religious body. Another temporary habitation was forthwith secured; and on April 13, 1853, the community was installed in the institution known as the Wheeling Hospital, chartered under that name by the Virginia Assembly, and used as a military hospital during the Civil War. Sisters Anastasia O'Brien, Alexis Spellicy, Sebastian Reis and Agatha Guthrie composed the original band in Wheeling. The number was increased to six in May, when Mother Celestine, who accompanied Mother Saint John Fournier back to Philadelphia, took from there to Wheeling Sister Liguori Leigh and Mother Agnes Spencer. The latter was appointed Superior in Wheeling, and remained there until the fall of 1854, when she returned to Carondelet.

Mother Agnes Spencer was a native of Lancashire, England, and entered the novitiate in Carondelet in 1846 in the twenty-fourth year of her age. She was a woman of strong personality, great tact and ability, and was chosen by Mother Celestine to introduce the Sisters of Saint Joseph into the diocese of Buffalo. Reverend Edmund O'Connor, pastor of Canandaigua, was opening a parochial school in his parish, and applied to Mother Celestine for teachers on the advice of Bishop Timon, whose interest in the community, especially in its work for the deaf, had not relaxed since, in company with Bishop Rosati, he had welcomed the pioneers to America.

On December 3, 1854, Mother Agnes Spencer, Sister Theodosia Hageman, Sister Francis Joseph Ivory, and Sister Petronilla Roscoe left Saint Louis for Canandaigua. They were obliged to travel by boat to Alton, which they reached at midnight. A railroad in process of construction between Chicago and St. Louis was completed as far as Alton. Here the Sisters took the train, and arrived at Chicago on the following afternoon. They were cordially received and entertained until evening by Bishop O'Regan, former president of Carondelet Seminary.[13] Leaving Chicago on the evening of December 4, they reached Buffalo at 7 P. M. December 6, after a long, cold ride. The train was insufficiently heated, and with the mercury almost at zero, the passengers were dependent for comfort on their warm wraps. Snow was falling continually, and at Rochester the next morning, there was a long delay until the track ahead could be cleared for further passage.

The travellers spent the interval with the Sisters of Charity at their convent near the station, where Sister Francis was surprised and delighted to find an old school friend in one of the Sisters located there. This was the first time that the two had met in the religious garb, and, woman-like, each was much interested in the other's habit. At ten o'clock on the evening of December 7, the Sisters reached Canandaigua. In the absence

[13] Consecrated Bishop of Chicago, July 1854.

of the pastor on a sick call, they were met by Mr. Cochran, a railroad official and prominent Catholic of the city, who conducted them to the parochial residence. After Mass the following morning, they took possession of their own home, a pretty white frame building in the center of fine grounds. The place had formerly been a nursery, and besides an orchard, contained garden plots, hidden that morning under trackless snow. The Sisters named their white cottage the Convent of the Immaculate Conception in honor of the day, December 8, 1854, ever memorable as the day on which the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed.

The school for girls was commenced in the convent, and for boys in the basement of the church. Both prospered, owing largely to the co-operation of the pastor, Father O'Connor, and his unfailing kindness to teachers and pupils. A sodality was organized, and soon, several large girls were received as boarders. Extra teachers were required, and in April 1855, Sisters Julia Littenecker and Bruno Nolan were sent to Canandaigua from Carondelet. Father Paris, spiritual Father of the Community in St. Louis, accompanied them. They narrowly escaped a serious accident near Detroit. The bridge over a shallow stream between high banks had been swept away by the bursting of a mill dam. The miller discovered this only a few minutes before midnight, at which time the train was due at the bridge. Frantically waving a lantern, he succeeded in checking the oncoming train almost on the edge of the embankment. Father Paris took pains to impress on the two young Sisters a sense of the danger from which they had escaped so narrowly, in order, as he said, that they might ever after be grateful to God for His care of them. The passengers spent several hours collecting stones and branches to effect a crossing; and when they reached the other side of the stream, all found shelter in a settlement near by until the arrival of a relief train from Detroit the following morning.

Reaching Canandaigua April 21, after a four days' journey,

the Sisters were soon assigned to duty, Sister Bruno in the classroom, and Sister Julia as music teacher. To Sister Julia also fell the duties of organist in the small church and director of the children's choir. She brought to her work qualifications of no common order. Born in 1836 in Hofweier, an exclusively Catholic city in the Grand Duchy of Baden, she was sent by pious parents to a convent of Benedictines in Offenburg, where she received an excellent education, becoming proficient especially in music and languages. With her parents and other members of her family, she came to St. Louis in the spring of 1853, and a few months later, at the age of eighteen, she was received as a novice in Carondelet. Her example was followed, during the next few years, by her two younger sisters, who served the community long and faithfully as Sisters Lidwina and Mechtilda. Grave and serious by nature, but with rare sweetness and grace of manner, Sister Julia gave evidence from her entrance into the novitiate of the deep piety and fervor, the love for the devotions and ceremonies of the Church, which distinguished her during the sixty years of her beautiful life as a Sister of St. Joseph. She had not completed her term of novice-ship when sent to Canandaigua, but made her vows there in St. Mary's Church the following year. At the same time, two postulants, received by Mother Agnes Spencer, were invested with the habit, Sisters Stanislaus Leary and Anastasia Donovan, both of Corning, New York.

A parochial school was begun in Rochester in 1856, but was temporary, the Sisters being recalled to Canandaigua at the end of the school year.[14] They were assigned to Buffalo instead. Here Bishop Timon had begun to press his project for a deaf-mute institute. Land was donated for this purpose by a benefactor of the Church in Buffalo, Louis Le Couteulx. Not having means at his disposal for the erection of suitable buildings, the Bishop had removed to Le Couteulx place some small cottages

[14] A permanent foundation was made in Rochester from Buffalo in 1864, and became independent in 1868 when the Buffalo diocese was divided.

which had been used by the Sisters of Charity pending the completion of their foundling asylum. Here, until better accommodations could be provided, he proposed to begin a parochial school, and also to provide for the instruction of a few deaf-mute children who had been brought to his notice. For the former, Sister Francis Joseph and Sister Bruno were sent from Canandaigua, and were later reinforced temporarily by Sisters Bernard Dinan and Philomene Sheridan from Toronto. Mother Celestine was appealed to for teachers of the deaf. The Sisters prepared to take up this work were few in number, and their services were required for the school in Carondelet. Bishop Timon, to his great disappointment, was obliged to defer his project for these afflicted children until the following year.

When the teachers for the parish school reached Buffalo, they found that the cottages were not ready. The pastor, Reverend J. M. Early gave up his residence for a temporary convent, and the church was converted into a school. The boys were taught by Sister Francis Joseph in the sacristy, and the girls' class room was the body of the church, separated from the sanctuary by a curtain. This state of affairs continued for the greater part of the year. The small community suffered much from poverty, and was often dependent for the necessaries of life on the Sisters of Charity, whose Superior, Sister Rosalia, did not forget her neighbors across the way. Bishop Timon, also, frequently made generous donations of money and provisions to the struggling institute. His hopes for the deaf began to be realized when Sister Mary Rose Marsteller came from Carondelet to instruct the Sisters in the sign language. She was not a teacher of the deaf-mutes, but during her fifteen years residence among them in St. Louis, had become an adept in the signs. The first pupils of Le Couteulx were a little German boy and several small girls from Canandaigua.

From this humble beginning developed a great institution from which teachers trained in the most scientific methods of imparting instruction to the deaf send out hundreds of these children of

silence, fully equipped for the battle of life and able to take their places side by side with their more fortunate brothers and sisters who have not been handicapped by being deprived of hearing. Marvellous results have been accomplished by the Sisters of St. Joseph in this field of education, and a new and holier meaning given to the lives of many who must otherwise have remained in ignorance of God and of Truth.

CHAPTER VII

PIONEER DAYS IN MINNESOTA

(1851–1857)

When in the early fall of 1851, Mother Celestine was called upon to send a missionary band to St. Paul, in what was then the Territory of Minnesota, she realized that the difficulties awaiting the pioneers in this great field, as yet uncultivated, called for strong and resolute souls, and her natural tenderness shrank from exposing her Sisters to the hardships of a new country so recently reclaimed from the barbarism of wandering tribes as to be almost devoid of the comforts of civilized life.

She saw, however, a possible chance, presented for the first time, of converting the Indians, one of the objects which the Sisters had in view when leaving France fifteen years before. After some hesitation, she chose for this distant post Mother Saint John Fournier, recently returned to Carondelet from Philadelphia, [as noted in the preceding chapter] Sister Philomene Vilaine. Sister Francis Joseph Ivory, twenty-seven years of age, full of courage and enthusiasm, and destined to be the pioneer of many missions, and Sister Scholastica Vasques, a young Sister of French-Spanish descent, but a native of St. Louis. These two had received the habit in Carondelet in 1847, Sister Scholastica being then only seventeen years of age. What the future held for them in the far northern country towards which their faces turned in the fall of 1851, they did not know—probably a martyr's death for one or more; but women whose community traditions linked them with the victims of the guillotine were not likely to quail before a tomahawk, and they looked forward to their new mission with more eagerness than fear.

The St. Paul of the early fifties is described as "a wild frontier

town, where Indians in gay blankets stalked the streets and scalping was still known." [1] Ten years had hardly passed since the Sioux and the Chippewas had fought out their deadly feuds in the neighboring camping grounds. They had forced the few white families then living in St. Paul to seek refuge on what was known as Mississippi Island, opposite the city, in the great Father of Waters.[2] The Catholic settlers had greatly increased since then. The Indians had withdrawn to their various reservations, where, held in check by government agents, they were gradually learning the arts of peace. Though the greater number were still in the darkness of paganism, many had become excellent Christians through the persevering efforts of two missionaries, Father Lucien Galtier and Father Augustine Ravoux. These were two of the four sub-deacons who had accompanied Bishop Loras in 1838 from Le Puy.[3]

Father Galtier was the founder of the city of St. Paul. A man of remarkable character and personality, he was in every way fitted for the great missionary work which he was called upon to undertake. Shortly after his ordination in 1840, he was sent by Bishop Loras to minister to the scattered population of Minnesota, then the northern part of the diocese of Dubuque. For several years, he was the only resident priest within the present limits of Minnesota. He established his first mission at Mendota, or as he called it, St. Peter, headquarters of the Indian fur trade in the north, and beautifully located near the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. Besides the rude warehouses of the French and Canadian traders, Mendota consisted of a few log huts, in the midst of which rose the stone house of the Territorial Governor, General Sibley. From the high bluffs across the river, old Fort St. Anthony [4] commanded a view of the surrounding hills, among which were the encampments of the Sioux, their tepees extending in picturesque dis-

[1] JOHN F. CARR, "John Ireland," *The Outlook,* April 24, 1908, p. 972.

[2] AUGUSTINE RAVOUX, *Memoirs and Reminiscences,* p. 7. St. Paul, 1890.

[3] The others were Remy Petoit and James Causse.

[4] The present Fort Snelling.

array down to the water's edge. Near the Governor's mansion, Father Galtier built his small log chapel.

At that time a single log house occupied the site of what is now the capitol of Minnesota. In October, 1841, Father Galtier crossed over from Mendota with eight men who had volunteered to build a church. In a grove of red and white oak on high ground near the river, the church was built of tamarack logs and roofed with bark-covered slabs brought by steamboat from Stillwater. It was twenty-five feet long, eighteen wide, and ten high, with two windows, one on each side. On November 1, 1841, it was dedicated to St. Paul, because the name sounded well and was short enough to be understood by all.[5] A city of the same name soon grew up around the church. St. Paul became the center of a Catholic population of French, Irish and Swiss, and in ten years had increased sufficiently in size and importance to be made the see of a new diocese. Father Galtier had then returned to Dubuque, and Father Ravoux was alone in Minnesota until the coming of Bishop Crétin in the summer of 1851.

Bishop Crétin was no stranger to the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Shortly after his ordination at St. Sulpice in 1823, he had been sent by his bishop, Alexander Raymond Devie, "one of the glories of the episcopate of France," [6] to Ferney on the French frontier facing Geneva. Ferney was the only part of the diocese of Belley in which Protestantism had obtained a foothold; [7] and in this citadel of Calvanism, the young priest labored until 1838, first as vicar and then as parish priest, with a devotion equaling that of his friend, the Curé of Ars. Bishop Devie, in his zeal for the conversion of Ferney, had opened there a school for girls in 1824, which he placed in charge of Mother St. Joseph

[5] REV. AMBROSE MCNULTY, "Beginnings of the Catholic Church in St. Paul," *Minnesota Historical Society Collections,* vol. X, p. 233.

[6] JOHN IRELAND, "Life of Bishop Crétin," in *Acta and Dicta,* vol. V, p. 61. St. Paul, 1917.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 57.

Chanay from Lyons.[8] Thus for fourteen years, the Sisters of St. Joseph had united their efforts for the spread of the Faith with those of the future Bishop of St. Paul. In 1838, Father Crétin offered himself for the foreign mission field and accompanied Bishop Loras to America, spending his first winter in St. Louis. It was during that time that he gave a three weeks' mission in Carondelet. He went to St. Paul as its first bishop July 2, 1851, and almost immediately made provision for a school, applying to Mother Celestine for teachers.

On the evening of October 28, 1851, the four Sisters mentioned above left St. Louis on the steamer St. Paul, bound for the head-waters of the Mississippi. Ice was already forming in the river, and the boat made no stops until October 31, when it reached Galena, Illinois. Here the Sisters remained over night at the home of the chief official, Mayor Dowling, whose wife was a Catholic. On the following morning, they heard Mass at a convent of the Sisters of Mercy, and resumed their journey. A delay of several hours at Dubuque enabled them to visit the new home of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and at Prairie du Chien, they met Father Lucien Galtier, who came on board at that point bound for one of the villages up the river. From him they learned a great deal about the history and condition of the new country to which they were going, and received hearty wishes for their success.[9]

If the Sisters had believed in omens, they would have considered it a fortunate one to meet, on their way to St. Paul, the founder of that city, and the architect of its first cathedral. Any illusions which they might have entertained with regard to the city's social aspects, however, were dispelled by another of their fellow passengers, Major Fridley, agent of the Chippewa Indians, who, while praising the town, continued to impress on

[8] LEBEURIER, *Life of Mother St. Joseph,* p. 109. Translation by Sister De Pazzi O'Connor, New York, 1876.

[9] SISTER IGNATIUS LOYOLA COX, "Early History of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Minnesota," *Acta and Dicta,* vol. III, p. 225.

the Sisters the fact that it was a "little wild." [10] The steamer arrived at its destination during the night of November 2. Morning disclosed to the passengers snow-covered bluffs, and the river filled with floating ice. The Sisters were met by Father Ffrench, whom the Bishop had sent to conduct them to the home of a parishioner, Madame Turpin. Under her hospitable roof they remained until evening, when Bishop Crétin himself came to conduct them to their new home.

This is described by Sister Francis Joseph Ivory as "a low frame shanty on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi." [11] It was none other than the episcopal palace to which Bishop Crétin had been introduced on his arrival five months before. It had recently been vacated for the new brick church, residence, and seminary combined, a few blocks away.[12] The convent was about eighteen feet square, a story and a half high, containing two small rooms, one on the ground floor and one above. Near by was a one story kitchen, twelve feet square. The log church which Father Ravoux had enlarged to the imposing proportions of forty-five by eighteen feet, stood a few yards to the right, facing Bench Street and the river. It was now turned over to the Sisters for a girls' school. Like the convent, it contained little that could be called furniture; and the Sisters spent long hours filling in the chinks in the wall with newspapers to keep out the cold.

On November 10, the school was ready for occupancy. Fourteen pupils were enrolled on that day. The first name registered was Elizabeth Cox, the next two in order, Philomene and Ludmilla Auge.[13] Major Fridley of the Indian agency, sent his daughter, and the Honorable Henry M. Rice, a prominent citizen, placed his niece with the Sisters. Both of these men lived at a distance from the school, and wished the two girls taken as boarders. As there was no accommodation for them in the tiny

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 255.

[11] *Diary* of SISTER FRANCIS JOSEPH. *Carondelet Archives.*

[12] RAVOUX, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

[13] Philomene Auge became a Benedictine nun at St. Cloud, Minnesota, and Ludmilla, a Sister of St. Joseph at St. Paul, Sister Columba.

convent, Mr. Rice fitted up a one room annex in a style, which, compared with the other meagre apartments, was very luxurious. Soon, Mary Bottineau from Saint Anthony was added to the list of boarders in the embryonic institution which developed into St. Joseph's Academy.

The winter brought suffering and privation, but failed to dampen the ardor of the pioneers. The interesting chronicler of early days, Sister Francis Joseph, writes:

We all enjoyed the novelty of our position. There was a small stove on the first floor, the pipe of which was set upright through the roof. In the opening around it, we could count the stars. Rain storms were frequent. When the rain poured down through the roof, we, like the man in the Gospel, took up our beds and walked, but only to rest in the water on the other floor. As there was only one well in the place, and this was generally locked, we often had a long wait for our coffee in the morning. I remember one day that we had nothing to eat until late in the afternoon, when dear Mother surprised us with a portion of a small loaf of bread which she had sent for to a French woman. The chief settlers were Indian traders. No farms had yet been planted, and there were no public conveyances. The only roadway to the settlements below was the Mississippi River, which was frozen; and wolves often attacked travellers as they journeyed over the ice. The nearest place to procure provisions was Dubuque, five hundred miles away. So, very often, others were as bad off as ourselves. This was the condition of affairs from November to about the last of May, when an event occurred that changed all for the better, the arrival of the first steamer after the ice had broken. As the boat, *City of St. Paul,* came steaming up, the excitement was intense. Every individual in town was on the river bank to welcome the friend that brought comfort. All temporal difficulty vanished with this event. The spring was charming. The prairies were in full bloom, wild ducks were plentiful on the rivers and lakes, and settlers were coming in from all quarters.[14]

[14] *Diary,* SISTER F. JOSEPH. *Carondelet Archives.* Two years after the arrival of Bishop Crétin, the number of Catholics in St. Paul had increased

Before spring, the number of boarders had increased to eight; and by April, the day school was crowded out of the vestry where the first classes were taught, and filled the body of the log church. A two story brick building was begun with large, airy, class rooms and pleasant apartments for boarders. It was ready for use in September, and the old church, St. Paul's first cathedral, became the Sisters' chapel.

During the summer of 1852, Mother Celestine made her first visit to St. Paul. She had just finished a visitation of the houses in Philadelphia, where, on May 29, she presided over a ceremony of profession in the chapel of St. John's orphanage, the first at which the newly consecrated Bishop, John Nepomucene Neumann, officiated. As there was no direct communication between Philadelphia and St. Paul, she was obliged to return to St. Louis, travelling from there by boat to St. Paul, which she reached before the end of June. The great fatigue of this long journey was forgotten by Mother Celestine in her enthusiasm over what she loved to call her "dear Indian mission," the good work of instructing the Indians having actually commenced during the winter before her arrival.

There was a settlement of Winnebago Indians at Long Prairie,[15] over a hundred miles northwest of St. Paul. The Winnebagos were Catholics, having received the Faith first from the Jesuit missionaries; and prior to 1848, were located at Prairie du Chien. At their own request, Bishop Loras had sent them a priest, who, however, met with opposition from the officials of the agency. These even procured from the governor of the territory the dismissal of the Black-gown from the mission. The chief then demanded a Catholic teacher and insisted that his petition be presented to the President. This secured the appointment in 1844 of Father Crétin as their pastor, but he was not permitted to open a school. His expulsion also was finally

from the small congregation in the log chapel to fifteen hundred souls. RICHARD H. CLARKE, *Lives of Deceased Bishops*, p. 442. New York, 1888.

[15] Present county seat of Todd county, Minnesota.

brought about by the agent, and the Indians removed to Long Prairie.[16]

Long Prairie fell within the limits of the new diocese of St. Paul. Bishop Crétin, in the fall of 1851, a few months after taking possession of his see, obtained tardy justice from the government, and was aided in the establishment of a school among the Winnebagos. He sent Father Francis de Vivaldi to take charge of it. Father Vivaldi soon found it impossible to attend to the school and his various missionary duties, and in the beginning of 1852, begged for some Sisters for the school. None could come from St. Louis during the winter months, while the river was blocked with ice. In this emergency, Sister Scholastica Vasques was sent from St. Paul to Long Prairie, and remained from January until March, instructing the Indian children and preparing them for their first Communion. She had an assistant teacher in Miss Legeau, a young French woman, with whose kind and hospitable family she also found a temporary home.

Mother Celestine during her visit made arrangements for a permanent mission among the Indians, and on her return to St. Louis in August, sent Sister Xavier Husey and Sister Cesarine Mulvy, the former to replace Sister Francis Joseph, whom she took back with her to St. Louis, and the latter to be Sister Scholastica's companion at Long Prairie when that mission reopened in the fall. The only way of reaching Long Prairie was by wagons which were sent at regular intervals to St. Paul to get supplies for the agency. It required four days to complete the journey, stops being made over night at the farm houses on the way. In fine weather, the long ride through the open country with its vast expanses stretching on all sides to the horizon was enjoyable; but when the trip had to be made in winter, as sometimes happened, the experience was memorable for the biting winds that swept across the prairies, penetrating the thick blankets heaped about the luckless travellers.

[16] J. G. SHEA, *History of the Catholic Missions*, p. 400. New York, 1883.

With the exception of the agency buildings, Long Prairie was a settlement of tents and wigwams, and echoed nightly to the music of Indian dances. The children were sent regularly to school, and were instructed in the elementary branches. The girls were also taught sewing and knitting; and a farmer, employed for the purpose, gave the boys practical training in the fields. Besides teaching, the Sisters were required to distribute the provisions supplied by the government to each family in proportion to its size. The Sisters' own accommodations at first were very poor. Sister Appolonia Meyer, who spent several weeks at the reservation, has left the following description of the house:

> It was built of logs and was one story high, the dimensions being about eighteen by twenty feet. It contained but one apartment. and that we used for parlor, refectory, community room and kitchen. Our sleeping room was a very small and low attic. Our mattress was nice, clean hay, and our bedstead the floor. Over the hay we spread our blankets and comfortables in truly primitive style.[17]

During the fall of 1852, the house was enlarged and made comfortable; and in May, 1853, the two lonely missionaries were glad to welcome a third member of their community in the person of Sister Simeon Kane, sent from Carondelet with Sister Victorine Schultz.

Sister Victorine remained as music teacher in St. Paul. She had a remarkably fine voice, and gained local fame through an incident quite embarrassing to herself. Bishop Crétin, a great lover of music, was a promoter of congregational singing, in which he expected all to join who attended divine service, including the Sisters. The first time that Sister Victorine's sweet and powerful soprano was heard in the hymns, all the other singers gradually stopped to listen. When she realized her part as an unintentional soloist, she desisted also. The choral part of the service was over for that day, but Sister Victorine's musical

[17] *Letter of Sister Appolonia Meyer, Archives of St. Paul Province.*

reputation was established. The school at this time was prospering, though the teaching staff was small, and some changes were made during the summer. Mother Saint John Fournier was sent to Philadelphia, and was replaced by Mother Seraphine Coughlin, who arrived from St. Louis, August 18, 1853, accompanied by Sister Ursula Murphy.

Mother Seraphine was a native of New York and had received the habit in 1846 at Carondelet. She is described by Archbishop Ireland as "a woman whose intelligence, refinement, and saintliness of character stamped her in the memory of the diocese as an ideal daughter of Christ and an ideal servant of Holy Church." [18] She had been for a short time mistress of novices in St. Louis, and was known and loved by the Sisters in St. Paul, who had a warm welcome for her when she arrived among them. She found an able assistant in Sister Xavier Husey, an excellent teacher, and though a strict disciplinarian, tenderly thoughtful for those under her care.

Many settlers were coming into the territory, and with the rapid growth of population, the school increased in numbers. Several young girls were received as postulants; and in November 1853, on the insistance of the Bishop, Sisters Philomene Vilaine and Ursula Murphy, with a postulant, Miss Maloney, were sent to open a school in St. Anthony Falls, now East Minneapolis, the only town in the Territory besides St. Paul where there was a resident priest. This priest was a Frenchman, Father Ledon. His congregation was poor, and consisted of French-Canadians and a large proportion of mixed French and Indian descent. Father Ledon fitted up for a school an old frame house that had been the property of fur traders. This the Sisters occupied until a larger one was built the following year. The new school was placed under the patronage of our Blessed Mother and called St. Mary's Convent. It was numerically small, and the income was very limited; but the Sisters found the means of supporting three orphan children whose parents had fallen victims to cholera.

[18] *Our Catholic Sisterhoods*, p. 3. St. Paul, 1902.

This small band was the germ of the great benevolent institutions since organized by the Sisters in the North.

From their arrival in St. Paul in 1851, Bishop Crétin was anxious to establish a hospital. Land was donated for the purpose by Henry M. Rice; and a Sioux chieftain, then occupying the site of the present city of Minneapolis, promised lumber from his forests. It was not until the fall of 1853, that the Bishop began the erection of a hospital building, the first of its kind in Minnesota. It was of stone, four stories in height. The difficulties attending its construction, due to scarcity of laborers and material, were so great that a year elapsed before it was completed. In the meantime, cholera, which during the few preceding years had wrought deadly havoc in regions further south, reached St. Paul, and spread with great rapidity. The old log church was converted into a hospital, where the Sisters, amateur nurses though they were, gave themselves with zeal to the care of the cholera patients. They were reinforced in August by Sisters Augustine Spencer, Marcelline Dowling and Euphemia Murray, sent by Mother Celestine from Carondelet for the new hospital. The need of such an institution was more than ever realized, and work was pushed on the building, Bishop, priests and seminarians all lending their aid to the workmen until it was completed in the fall of 1854.

In May of that year, the religious habit was conferred for the first time in St. Paul. The only recipient was a young French-Canadian, Louise Lemay. She was one of four postulants who had presented themselves. Of the remaining three, one was not admitted; another, Jane Bruce, died before the end of her probation; and the third, Julia Lemay, cousin of Louise, received the habit a few months later. Mother Celestine, taking with her Sister Margaret Sinsalmeyer, a novice, went north for the ceremony, which took place on May 27 in the Cathedral on Wabash Street. Bishop Crétin presided; and so great was the excitement attending this first ceremony of religious reception in St. Paul, that the young novice left the church without being given a name

ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA
(Original building on extreme right.)

by which she would be known in religion. She was obliged to repair to the sacristy to make known her dilemma, and the Bishop, opening his ordo to the Saint of the day, conferred on her the name of Gregory. Sister Gregory and her cousin, afterwards known as Sister Pauline, were followed into the convent in course of time by fourteen other members of their family, and were themselves destined to spend long lives of great usefulness in the Congregation.[19]

The stone building erected by Bishop Crétin was of ample proportions, and was intended for the double purpose of hospital and novitiate. The few orphans left homeless by the cholera also found in it a temporary refuge. Mother Seraphine took up her residence here, exercising supervision at the same time over the academy, which was enlarged in the fall of 1854 to relieve crowded conditions. An unsuccessful effort was made by the Bishop to obtain from the legislature a proportion of the common school fund.[20] In the support of their schools, his parishioners were thrown upon their own limited resources. Their chief asset in most instances was their children, and these they sent to school in large numbers. The school rooms were filled to over-flowing, though educational facilities, except such as were improvised by the Sisters, were almost wholly lacking. In addition, the teachers were few. Until 1855, only two novices had been received. On May 17 of that year, this number was increased when Rose Cox, a young woman of superior talent and finished education, received the habit and the name of Sister Ignatius Loyola. On March 25, 1856, Bishop Crétin presided at the first double ceremony in the chapel of the hospital, when Sister Marcelline Dowling, who had come from St. Louis as a novice, made her vows, and Sister Peter Richard Grace was invested with the religious habit. In the meantime, four Sisters had come from Carondelet, sent by Mother Celestine, who always

[19] Sister Gregory died at Nazareth Retreat, St. Louis, July 15, 1894; Sister Pauline at St. Paul, March 12, 1912.

[20] RICHARD H. CLARKE, *Lives of Deceased Bishops,* p. 424. New York 1872.

responded to the call from the North, though the number of Sisters that she could send at any one time was small, and could reach St. Paul only in the summer months, when a river voyage was possible. These four were Sisters Saint Protais, Mary George Bradley, Alexis Spellicy and Alphonsus Byrne. All were assigned to places in the schools except the last named, who was sent for hospital duty.

The young community was prospering under the wise and kind direction of Bishop Crétin. Many instances are on record of his thoughtfulness for the Sisters during the long, cold winters, and of his interest at all times in their welfare and their work. His sympathies reached out to all classes, and young and old paid him the homage of their love. Worthy of a St. Vincent de Paul was his tenderness towards homeless little ones. This was illustrated in a touching manner at New Year's in 1856, when he sent to the convent a tiny girl of three years old, calling it his New Year's gift to the Sisters. The child had been found, warmly wrapped, by the side of its widowed mother, who had died of cold and want in her poor home.[21] A writer in *The Outlook* (1908) gives an interesting pen picture of

> the missionary Crétin, first Bishop of St. Paul, who had won Voltaire's town of Ferney back to the Faith, and here in the wilderness lived many months on crackers and cheese that he might tend his little flock without taxing their poverty. In sympathy and wit he was an American, a quaint and lovable old man, whose room contained a busy printing press and a hundred mechanical wonders of his own invention. He was idolized by the dozen boys of the school, who gathered about him of nights at the organ, where they learned to shout lustily in chorus both Yankee Doodle and the Marseillaise.[22]

Among the boys of this school, conducted in the basement of the church under the direction of Father Peyregrosse, was John

[21] The little girl remained for several years with the Sister, and was then adopted into the family of General James Shields, of Civil War fame.

[22] JOHN FOSTER CARR, *The Outlook*, April 21, 1908, p. 972.

Ireland. When the pioneer Sisters of St. Joseph came to St. Paul, he was a lad of thirteen years. His first visit to the convent was an unceremonious one. He went in capacity of guide to a postulant who had arrived by boat from Dubuque. The boy knocked at the door, and leaving the young woman to wait for a response, ran at full speed down the street. Fifty years later, as Archbishop of St. Paul, he wrote:

Without bidding of mine, there traces itself vividly on the canvas of my fancy the picture of the convent in St. Paul as it was wont in the long ago to strike my boyish gaze. The awe and timidity are back with which I would approach the little cottage and struggle into speech in the presence of the Sisters. Never since, amid all the stately and renowned convents that I have seen in my travels, did I feel myself confronted with visions of a life so beauteous, so supernatural, as when my eyes rested on the early Sisters of St. Paul. I see these Sisters in their little cottage, in their rustic school room, in their tiny chapel. I see them on the green sward in the summer, amid the deep snows in winter, stepping demurely across the field on their way from the convent to the quaint Cathedral on Wabasha Street. I see them bending low to murmur words of hope and patience into the ears of the poor, the sick and the dying; and I hear the answering words of love and faith springing from the lips of men and women, who, in the whisperings and deeds of the Sisters, caught glimpses of another world and felt themselves for the moment lifted into the life and light of Heaven.[23]

[23] JOHN IRELAND, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PROGRESS OF A DECADE (1847–1857)

WHILE the Congregation was being successfully inaugurated in the East and North, its interests nearer home were not being neglected. Communities were sent from the Mother House to Weston, Missouri, and to Sulphur Springs, Mississippi; the school in Cahokia, from which the Sisters were driven by the great flood of 1844, was reopened, and a German orphan asylum begun in St. Louis. Mother Celestine was also devoting her wonderful energy to building up the academy and novitiate in Carondelet.

Though the convent had been enlarged in 1846 by the addition of the central, or main wing, it still proved inadequate; and in 1849, a separate two-story building was erected to the north and east, containing a chapel above and class rooms on the ground floor. The records of the academy during these years show an average of one hundred and forty pupils, fifty of whom were boarders. Of the remainder, twenty were orphan girls, and these were transferred in 1849 to St. Vincent's convent in St. Louis, where the removal of the boys' class rooms to a new school building made temporary accommodations for the orphans possible. Many southern planters, finding intercourse with St. Louis easy and pleasant by reason of the comfortable steamers that were now plying the Mississippi at regular intervals, brought their daughters to the French convent at Carondelet, whose academic department was presided over by Sister Mary Rose Marsteller.

Stern and capable, Sister Mary Rose gave to the school the best efforts of her well trained mind. She organized its teaching staff, and shaped its curriculum on the standard methods of her day. Patronage and success paid tribute to her ability, and

co-workers honored her for her sterling worth. The letters of former students, referring to this period of their Alma Mater's history, never fail to mention the high degree of efficiency which it attained under her strict régime. Among her assistant teachers was Sister Mary Herman Ryan, the gifted sister of Abram J. Ryan, poet priest of the South; and her pupils included Caroline Palmier, a descendant of Le Moine d'Iberville. Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky and Georgia each had representatives in the student body of the decade immediately preceding the Civil War; and to these during the following decade, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Iowa, Kansas and even Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania and New York added their quotas. Missouri was at all times largely represented. Names familiar to St. Louisans, such as Sappington, Picot, O'Fallon and Papin appear on record with Tucker and Hamilton, Murray, Sullivan and McCann. Distinctively Virginian is Pocahontas Davis; while colonial wars and international relations are suggested by America Calvert and Vienna Stuart. Ten pupils in a class of ninety-eight girls are entered on the registers as Protestants; and one, claiming a long descent from French Catholic ancestors, is listed as having no religion at all.

In the curriculum, as Americanized by Sister Mary Rose, the French language still held a prominent place. There is in the library at Carondelet, among its treasured heirlooms, a copy of the "Method of Instruction," [1] printed in Lyons for the Sisters of Saint Joseph, and used by our pioneer Sisters. It is a book of three hundred pages, a model course of study, with minute instructions regarding the matter to be taught and the manner of presenting each subject. There is no duty of a Catholic teacher that does not receive its share of attention in this beautifully written manual. Prepared under the direction of Bishop Devie, it was printed with his approbation. Outside of the elementary branches, with special stress on religion, the Sisters included

[1] *Methode D'Enseignement pour les Classes de Sœurs de St. Joseph,* Lyons, 1832.

sacred and profane history, Latin and vocal music. To these, Sister Mary Rose added a full secondary course, with mathematics, rhetoric, German, and the natural sciences of botany, physics, chemistry and astronomy. The ornamental branches were not overlooked, and besides instrumental music, including instruction on piano, harp and guitar, were taught painting, tapestry, fancy needle work, and the old-time accomplishment of moulding fruit and flowers in wax.

There was no time left for idling to a student who followed the crowded program at St. Joseph's in the fifties; and delinquents received little mercy from Sister Mary Rose, who reserved the hidden depths of tenderness in her nature for the weak and ailing among her charges. Of one breach of discipline, she, herself, was guilty when she admitted into the academy, exclusively for girls, a small boy, a pale little cripple, handicapped in the give and take of boyhood life at the village school, where she feared that he would be jostled by his playmates. Unconsciously, she was casting bread upon the waters. Afflicted in later years by a malady which necessitated the use of a support in walking, she found herself everywhere the center of a willing throng of school girls, this one to place her chair, that to carry book or work box, a third to relieve her of the awkward cane, their faces reflecting the gracious smile that lighted up her fine old countenance, and that was their envied recompense.

The spirit of endurance characterizing the early settlers of the Mississippi Valley, who made light of creature comforts, was evidently transmitted in some degree to their daughters, all of whom became sincerely attached to their surroundings, primitive as these must have seemed to many. The academy furnished no luxuries, and many conveniences were wanting. We are not told who molded the "home-made candles in home-made candlesticks" [2] used during the long evening study hours; but Sister Saint Protais, who taught French and penmanship, fashioned the

[2] SISTER FEBRONIA BOYER, "Autobiography," Ms. in Convent Archives. Sister Febronia entered the novitiate in 1848—aged 16—and died at Nazareth Retreat in 1919.

quill pens, the only kind in use. In a brick oven in the yard, Sister Antoinette baked bread for the plain but wholesome meals, and "it was always good, because she prayed all the time that she was making it." [3] The convent garden blossomed and bore fruit under the care of Francis Joseph L'Ange, who was also for thirty years the parish organist, and with his fine voice led the choir in the village church.[4] His little daughter, Mary Celestine, a pupil of the academy, was distinguished among her companions because she had been held at the baptismal font by Mother Celestine, sponsor by proxy for a distant relative of the L'Anges.

The academic year was long, and was marked at its close, late in July, by the usual school "exhibitions," at which the distribution of honors and awards took place. The old chests preserved for years in the convent attic were mutely eloquent of the taste for stage finery and appurtenances evinced by the youthful actresses, who yearly displayed their histrionic ability on open air platforms erected in the shade of the trees or buildings, and who always met with appreciative audiences made up of their friends and the people of the village.

The academy was chartered in 1853. Two years earlier, in 1851, Carondelet was incorporated as a city, and the town trustees were superseded by the city council. One of the first acts of the council was to provide for public schools.[5] The village school, hitherto taught by the Sisters, gave place to a free school maintained by them for the children of the parish. The city at this time extended from the Mississippi River, four blocks west to Michigan Avenue, then an ungraded country road; and stretched a dozen blocks or more north and south along the river front. Carondelet Road[6] was still the principal thoroughfare

[3] SISTER FEBRONIA BOYER, "Autobiography," Ms. in Convent Archives.

[4] The name of the church was changed in 1841 from Our Lady of Mount Carmel to Sts. Mary and Joseph.

[5] The first public school was organized July 15, 1851, this action having been suggested by the Mayor in his first message May 14, 1851. Messrs. Ford and Harding were the first teachers; John Everhart, the first superintendent. Extract from *Council Meetings*, May 26, 1852.

[6] Broadway.

between St. Louis and Jefferson Barracks, then an important military post, reached "semi-occasionally" by omnibus lines, the only public means of conveyance.[7]

Two blocks from the convent on the north-west was the Diocesan Seminary, transferred in 1849 by Archbishop Kenrick[8] from the site it had occupied in St. Vincent's parish, St. Louis. The Seminary, opened under the presidency of Reverend Anthony O'Regan, future Bishop of Chicago, was a large, unpretentious brick building, surrounded by fine grounds. Its proximity to the academy proved an advantage to the latter. Priests from the Seminary were the convent chaplains, and instructed the students twice a week in Christian Doctrine and liturgy. They taught the popular hymns, which remained favorites for years with succeeding classes of students. Archbishop Kenrick lectured at the Seminary, and his frequent visits to the academy after lecture hours, sometimes in company with distinguished guests, were always anticipated with pleasure and recalled with delight. During the ten years that the Seminary remained in Carondelet,[9] Fathers O'Regan, Hennessey, Feehan, Ryan, and O'Hanlon[10] came to be familiar figures in St. Joseph's chapel and study hall. They frequently assisted, with the Arch-

[7] WM. C. BRECKENRIDGE in *Missouri Historical Collections,* vol. IV, p. 50, St. Louis, 1913.

[8] St. Louis was made an Archbishopric in 1847. On September 3, 1848, Archbishop P. R. Kenrick was invested with the pallium in Philadelphia by his brother.

[9] It was removed to Cape Girardeau in 1859.

[10] Rev. Anthony O'Regan was consecrated Bishop of Chicago in 1854; John A. Hennessey, of Dubuque in 1866; Patrick A. Feehan, of Nashville in 1865; and Archbishop of Chicago in 1880; Patrick J. Ryan, coadjutor of St. Louis in 1872, and Archbishop of Philadelphia in 1884. The Sisters of St. Joseph were later called on to open houses in all these dioceses except Philadelphia, where they were already located. A mission accepted at Lyons, Iowa, in the diocese of Dubuque, was cancelled by the Sisters for some unexplained reason. Rev. John O'Hanlon, chaplain in 1851, returned to Ireland, where all his literary work was done. In 1891 he sent from Dublin to the Sisters in Carondelet a copy of his book, *Life and Scenery in Missouri.*

bishop or Father Paris, spiritual Father, at the receptions of novices and at their profession.

These ceremonies took place, not on specified days twice a year, as came to be the custom later on, but whenever a postulant or novice completed her term of probation or noviceship. They were marked with great simplicity, and after 1847 were always held in the convent chapel instead of in the parish church. At a profession of May 3, 1852, Bishop Crétin was the officiating prelate. Though the Congregation was growing in numbers, the increase was not in proportion to the demands made on Mother Celestine for Sisters. The houses opened from Carondelet in the East and North during the decade gradually gained in numerical strength sufficiently to take care of their own interests; but until 1855, they received recruits from the Mother House in St. Louis. Bishop McLaughlin of Brooklyn, desiring a community of the Sisters of St. Joseph in that year, was obliged to appeal to the eastern novitiates; and Bishop Timon's repeated requests for more teachers to take charge of his cathedral school had to be refused.

In the spring of 1848, Mother Celestine had revived the mission at Cahokia, from which the Sisters were driven by the great flood of 1844. For two years after the death of Father Loisel in 1845, Cahokia had only temporary pastors. The parochial residence in the interval was converted by the trustees of the Commons into a girls' school under secular teachers. These proving unsatisfactory, a petition was addressed to Mother Celestine, who answered by sending on March 10, Sisters Philomene Vilaine, Ambrose Hanson and Francis Joseph Ivory to open classes again in "The Abbey." After three weeks spent in putting the dilapidated convent in order, they commenced school on the first of April, registering on that day fifty girls from twelve to eighteen years of age. In August, illness obliged the return of Sister Francis Joseph to Carondelet.

The mission at this time was in charge of Father Ignatius Maas, of the St. Louis Province of Jesuits. He remained a

year, securing before his departure, the transfer of the school property from the trustees of the Commons to the parish. He was succeeded by Father John Schultz. Cahokia was still damp and unhealthy. Extensive improvements made along the river bank lessened but failed to check entirely the annual inundation of the Mississippi. In 1851, another disastrous overflow occurred, reaching a height on June 7 almost equal to that of 1844. Many sought refuge in the upper story of the convent, from which all were rescued in boats; and the Sisters were brought back to Carondelet. Some of them returned the following year, but were permanently withdrawn by Mother Celestine in 1856.

This year of flood was also one of pestilence. In 1851, the cholera made its second appearance in St. Louis. The first was in the summer of 1849, during which it raged with fearful violence. The daily death rate averaged one hundred, decreasing the city's population in two months by six thousand. St. Vincent's convent was in the center of the afflicted district. Here the small community, Sister Delphine, Sisters Teresa Struckhof, Gertrude McGraw, Frances Nally and Justine Mulhall fearlessly gave themselves to the relief of their sick and dying neighbors, the last two for a short time only, as both were soon claimed by death. Sister Frances was much devoted to Sister Delphine, and in her solicitude for her beloved Superior, she wrote to Mother Celestine, begging that Sister Delphine be called to Carondelet, away from the danger to which she was daily exposed. On the morning following the receipt of this message, June 28, Mother Celestine went in to St. Vincent's, and found Sister Frances dying after a few hours' illness. Sister Justine, who had made her vows in April, was only eighteen years of age, a young woman of rare innocence, and extraordinary personal beauty. After the death of Sister Frances, Sister Justine expressed herself to the Sisters as sure that hers would follow. With this conviction, she made a careful preparation for the meeting with her Judge, and on the afternoon of July 1, was seized with the dread symptoms of

cholera. Archbishop Kenrick, ceaselessly attentive to his afflicted flock, anointed her that night, and remained until after midnight, that her dying wish might be fulfilled of renewing her vows on the morning of the Visitation. Before daylight broke that morning over the stricken city, Sister Justine's pure soul had taken its flight to God. When the cholera returned in 1851, Sister Gertrude McGraw was among its first victims.

The plague, after both its visitations, left many children homeless. When St. Joseph's Orphanage was transferred, in the late summer of 1849, to the new building on Clark Avenue and Thirteenth Street, the number of boys had increased from eighty in the previous year to one hundred and fifty. For boys and girls of German parentage made orphans by the epidemic, the German Catholics built a home in 1851 on Tenth and O'Fallon Streets, incorporating it under a board of managers. It was opened with solemn Mass and Benediction on the feast of St. Vincent de Paul, and under his patronage. Five Sisters from Carondelet were placed in charge, with Sister Angela Hanner as Superior. With the exception of a few years spent in the East, Sister Angela remained at St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum for over thirty years.[11] The Jesuit Fathers of St. Joseph's parish were chaplains during that time. The large number of religious vocations that developed among its boys and girls is a glowing testimony to the character of the institution. The Sisters of St. Francis, of the Precious Blood, and of St. Joseph each received its quota of the girls; and Jesuits, Benedictines, the diocesan clergy and the Christian Brothers count among their numbers men who received their early training at St. Vincent's.

Twelve novices made their vows in Carondelet during 1854, the largest number that had yet been professed in one year; but Mother Celestine still found the number too small to meet the growing needs of the Congregation, and appealed to the Mother House at Lyons for recruits. Lyons could not spare subjects

[11] In 1889, the charge of this institution was relinquished by the Sisters of St. Joseph, and passed to the Sisters of Christian Charity.

for America at that time, but aid came from an unexpected quarter. In Savoy, in a Seminary of the diocese of Tarentaise, was Abbé Miège, brother of John B. Miège, Vicar Apostolic of Indian Territory. Abbé Miège was a friend of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Moutiers, and through him his brother in America entered into correspondence with these Sisters. The result of the correspondence and also of a consultation between Bishop Miège and Mother Celestine in the summer of 1854, was an arrangement made by him with the Superiors in Moutiers, who promised to send Sisters from that place to Carondelet, with a view to undertaking later the education of the Indian children in his vast territory.[12]

Mother Thérèse Buisson was Superior of the pious community of Moutiers, which had become deeply interested in the foreign missions through the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith. The zeal of the Sisters was stimulated by the recent departure from Savoy of many priests and religious for the East Indies, among the latter, members of the neighboring communities of Annecy and Chambéry.[13] Mother Thérèse had no difficulty in getting volunteers for America and from them she chose Sister Euphrasia Meiller, late Superior at St. Sigismond, Sister Saint John Facemaz, Sister Gonzaga Grand, and Sister Leonie Martin. The most fervent daughters of Moutiers, Abbé Bouchage calls this first missionary band of a community which he describes as composed of "select souls whose names should be inscribed on the tablets of history for the edification of the faithful and as an example to the religious of the future." [14]

Leaving Moutiers on September 3, 1854, accompanied by Mother Thérèse, the missionaries made brief visits to the com-

[12] The jurisdiction of Bishop Miège extended over Kansas and Nebraska, and included all the Indian tribes west to the Rocky Mountains. He was then residing at St. Mary's Kansas, in the neighborhood of the Potawatomi settlements.

[13] The first Sisters of St. Joseph to go to the Indies left France in 1848. In the fall of 1853, another band of six left, accompanied by several Fathers of the Society of St. Francis de Sales. BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, pp. 346, 499.

[14] BOUCHAGE, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

munities of St. Sigismond and Chambéry, and then proceeded by stage to Lyons. Here they were warmly received by Mother Sacred Heart Tezenas, successor to Mother Saint John Fontbonne. At Lyons, they parted with Mother Thérèse, and placing themselves, as did the missionaries of 1836, under the protection of our Lady of Fourvières, proceeded to Paris, where they remained for a short time at a house of the Congregation in the Rue Monceau. They sailed from Havre on October 21, and by a strange coincidence, the name of the vessel was *Heidelberg,* the same as that on which the first Sisters came in 1836. On board was Right Reverend Augustus Mary Martin with four priests and several seminarians for his diocese of Natchitoches, Louisiana.

The Sisters landed at New Orleans December 7, the same date on which another band, as yet strangers to them, arrived in Canandaigua. After a few days spent with the Tertiary Carmelites in New Orleans, they proceeded by steamer to St. Louis, which they reached December 21, and where they were welcomed with open arms by Sister Felicité at St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum. On the following day, Mother Celestine, who had come in to meet them, conducted them to Carondelet. Brave and courageous souls, who had obeyed literally the Gospel precept to forsake home and country, they entered at once into the active life of the community, to which at least three of them, were to render long and faithful service.[15] Though young in years, they were all women of unusual ability, thoroughly imbued with the principles of the religious life, and animated by the spirit of sacrifice that characterized the pioneers of 1836. In Sister Saint John, who was in her thirtieth year and had spent eleven years in the con-

[15] Sister Euphrasia Meiller died in March 1859. The Sisters of St. Joseph did not go to Bishop Miège's diocese. On the occasion of that prelate's visit to St. Louis during the Provincial Council of 1858, the Superior of a colony of Sisters of Charity from Nashville, looking for a home in another diocese, appealed to him on the advice of the Jesuit, Father De Smet; and with the permission of Archbishop Kenrick, was received with her community under his jurisdiction.

vent, Mother Celestine, herself a woman of deep piety, was quick to recognize the strong and enlightened faith that measured temporal things only in the light of eternity, and the remarkable spiritual insight that rendered her peculiarly fitted for the guidance of others. Sister Saint John was chosen a member of the Council at the Mother House, and in that capacity, rendered invaluable assistance to Mother Celestine.

In the spring following the arrival of the Sisters from France, Mother Celestine opened at Sulphur Springs, Mississippi, the first mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the South. This was done at the request of the Bishop of Natchez, James Oliver Van de Velde, a former president of St. Louis University. The diocese of Natchez, established in 1853, embraced the entire state, and contained few priests or churches and a scattered Catholic population. At Sulphur Springs, there was a small settlement of good Catholic families who had built a church and had a resident pastor, Father Courjault. He secured for a Sisters' school a large building in the midst of a ten acre pine grove, and called it the Convent of Our Lady of the Woods. For this new home, four Sisters left Carondelet on March 19, 1855, Sister Cecilia Renot, as Superior, Sisters Gabriel Corbett, Leonie Martin, and Chrysostom McCann. They travelled by steamer to Vicksburg, where they were met by Bishop Van de Velde, and conducted to Canton, a day's journey by stage.

During this ride, they were treated for the first and only time to an exhibition of the bigotry which had spread throughout many parts of the country in the wake of the Know-Nothing movement. The only other occupant of the stage boarded it before it reached Canton, and was evidently a member of the Know-Nothing party. After surveying his fellow travellers for some time, the man began a series of insulting remarks to the Bishop, punctuating them now and then by spitting tobacco juice at him and repeating: "I think you are a Catholic priest." The Bishop took no notice of these insults until the stage stopped for a relay of horses. Then with a quick movement, and prob-

ably with a humorous smile at the new rôle which he was about to play, he forcibly ejected his tormentor. The latter, silenced and intimidated by this unexpected turn of affairs, made the remainder of the journey on the outside of the stage with the driver.

At Canton, the party remained over night at the home of a prominent Catholic gentleman, Judge Luckett, who gave them a cordial welcome, in spite of his jocosely expressed fear of being mobbed if he were known to harbor nuns. Sulphur Springs was reached by private carriage the next day. Here any doubts which the Sisters may have entertained as to the hospitality of Mississippi were speedily and finally dispelled. A devoted and warm hearted people received the strangers as angels in disguise. They were in Sulphur Springs only a few days, however, and had not yet commenced their school, when Father Courjault was carried away by death. Yellow fever had already appeared in the diocese, and some cases occurred at Canton where Father Courjault was called immediately after the arrival of the Sisters. He fell a victim to the plague there, and was buried at the Springs according to his request, in a place where the Sisters might pass his grave on their way to Mass and be reminded to pray for his soul.

His successor, Father Guillon, is described by the Sister historian of Sulphur Springs as "a saintly man, who, like his divine Master, loved souls and little children." He at once manifested a deep interest in the school, which was begun under his supervision and enrolled thirty day pupils and fifteen boarders. The latter were large girls from Natchez, Jackson and Vicksburg. A Sunday school was also organized for the colored children of the neighboring plantations. One of the pleasant memories which the Sisters entertained in later years of Sulphur Springs was the love shown by these children of bondage for their instructors, and their gratitude for the crumbs broken to them from the Bread of Life.

Just six months after they had left Carondelet, the Sisters were deprived of their beloved Superior, who succumbed to an

attack of yellow fever. Sister Cecilia, who during her short term of office had endeared herself to all by her zeal and gentleness, gave up her young life on September 19, after a brief illness. In November the revered Bishop Van de Velde, left almost alone in the midst of a stricken flock, fell a victim to the southern plague then raging in Natchez. In his successor, Bishop Elder, the small community at Our Lady of the Woods happily found new support; and under the direction of Sister Leonie Martin, the school continued to increase in numbers and popularity until the outbreak of the Civil War.

The breath of pestilence which swept the Mississippi Valley during the first half of this decade, 1850 to 1860, penetrated Canada. Some designated by the name of typhus, others called cholera, the plague that spread sickness and death in Toronto early in 1856, and carried away among its victims several members of the Congregation there, including Mother Delphine Fontbonne. Many trials had fallen to the lot of the gentle Superior, all of which she recorded sadly but without complaint in a letter written a few weeks before her death to Sister Felicité. In concluding, she wrote:

> Twenty years yesterday, the feast of St. Anthony, we embarked at Havre du Grâce. Who could tell then that in twenty years we would all be living still and separated from each other by such great distances? We indeed would not have believed it. How we ought to admire the Providence of God which has protected us until now. Think of me sometimes in your prayers. Give my love to all our dear Sisters.[16]

The news of her death, which occurred February 8, 1856, caused profound sadness in Carondelet, where she had spent so many years of privation and of happiness. The four and a-half years which she spent in Canada had produced good results. The community there now numbered thirty members in charge of four parochial schools and three orphanages, one of the latter

[16] Letter dated Jan. 18, 1856,

in the diocese of Hamilton. Mother Delphine was succeeded in the government of the Congregation in Toronto by Mother Teresa Struckhof, who had been sent there from St. Louis a few years before, and who after two years in this position, returned to Carondelet, first spending a short time in Wheeling, Virginia.

In the twenty years of its existence in America, the Congregation had, indeed, spread to distant fields of labor. The pioneers had watched its growth from the band of six, struggling against poverty in their log cabin on the banks of the Mississippi, to more than thirty times that number conducting schools, orphan asylums and hospitals in nine dioceses as widely separated from each other as St. Louis and Brooklyn, Toronto and Natchez. Archbishop Kenrick, with broad and splendid vision, had encouraged the sending of communities from Carondelet to dioceses other than his own, wherever there was pressing need, and now thought the time opportune to stabilize and strengthen the Congregation in America by a centralized government, formally approved by the Holy See. As we have seen in a preceding chapter, the Constitutions of 1650 were written for isolated communities. After the Revolution, the ecclesiastical authorities in Lyons united the houses of the Archdiocese under a general superior and obtained on May 5, 1829, a decree of commendation from Rome.[17] This extended to such houses only as were under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Lyons; and the Sisters in America, faced by the impossibility of speedy and satisfactory communication with Europe, followed the example of those in Bourg and Chambéry, and ceased to depend on the Mother House there.

The difficulties arising from national prejudice and changes of government which had intervened in Europe to prevent the extension of a central authority over houses established in other than the parent country, were non-existent in America. Still the bond existing between the Mother House at St. Louis and the communities in other dioceses was only that inspired by per-

[17] "Notice Historique," *Constitutions of Lyons*, 1910.

sonal devotion to Mother Celestine and confidence in her superior judgment. A loyal friendship, besides, existed among the Sisters themselves, all of whom turned to Carondelet as the cradle of the Congregation in America, just as those in Europe looked with special affection upon Le Puy. The seal of authority was required to make this tie binding. Concerted action on the part of the various communities was necessary for this, as well as the consent of their respective Ordinaries, who, under existing circumstances, felt themselves within their rights in asserting jurisdiction over the houses established in their respective dioceses at their own request.

Advised by Archbishop Kenrick and with his coöperation, Mother Celestine planned a general visitation for the purpose of bringing about a closer union, before proceeding to France to consult with superiors there, and eventually to Rome. She was obliged to defer this on account of failing health. However, in the spring of 1856, Father Augustus Paris, spiritual Father of the community in St. Louis, undertook a journey to Europe, stopping at the Eastern houses on his way to New York, and visiting many of those in Europe, especially in Lyons and Moutiers. In Lyons, a movement for centralized authority, which became effective two years later, in 1858, was already on foot under the supervision of Cardinal de Bonald, Ecclesiastical Superior of the Sisters in the Archdiocese. It was thought there, as in St. Louis, that the exigencies of the times required " a different organization, not in rules relating to the personal conduct of the Sisters, but for the government of the Institute." [18] From Europe, Father Paris wrote [19] urging Mother Celestine to make the intended visit to all the convents in the United States and Canada as soon as her health permitted. On his return in October, he reported that the superiors abroad favored a general form of government in America independent of any European house as best adapted to the needs of this country.[20] He was

[18] CARDINAL CAVEROT, in *Constitutions. Lyons,* 1882.

[19] Letter of May 11, 1856, in *Carondelet Archives.*

[20] *Community Annals,* p. 234.

accompanied by two Sisters sent from Moutiers to the aid of the American missions, Sister Victorine and Sister Cecelia Rosteing.

Mother Celestine's contemplated visitation was never made, and the project which she had so much at heart was destined to further postponement. Her health was now becoming more and more a matter of solicitude to the Sisters, by all of whom she was singularly loved. The arduous labor of twenty years had wrought its ravages, and early in 1857, it was seen by all that no amount of care and rest could ward off the fatal malady that was preying upon the life and energy of the revered Superior. For long weeks, the alternate fear and hope experienced by the Sisters was shared by the pupils in the academy, accustomed to listen for the clink of her beads as she came through the corridors on her morning visits to the study hall; and by the poor, who had never found her store of wordly goods too meagre to be shared with them. All had experienced her quick and ready sympathy in joy and sorrow.

Generous as her sacrifice had been in leaving home and country, Mother Celestine felt the parting with them keenly, and the trials of life in the New World often bore heavily on her. Letters from her aged father, the last written in anticipation of his own approaching end, full of affectionate solicitude for the absent daughter, and of loving messages from sisters and brother, who longed to clasp her in their arms, could not but make more poignant the pain of exile; but the Sisters of her community knew only the cheery smile, the gracious manner and joyousness of intercourse that characterized her. She was not a woman of many words, and the letters that she left are very brief; but by daily acts of loving kindness, she taught great lessons that sank into the hearts of her associates, equals or inferiors, everywhere and became traditions in the Congregation.

For the Sisters who gathered round her in her last illness, she had but one message. She urged them to keep up the beautiful customs that had helped so much to strengthen the spirit of charity and zeal. These were her distinctive traits in life, and in dying, she would bequeath them to her daughters. On

Saturday, June 6, it was evident to her faithful nurses, Sister Benedict Butler and Sister Febronia Boyer, that the end was near. The last rites of the church were administered by Father Feehan, then president of the diocesan Seminary; and on the afternoon of Sunday, June 7, Mother Celestine died, surrounded by her sorrowing community.

At the solemn Requiem Mass on June 9, Archbishop Kenrick, who had frequently visited and consoled the patient in her illness, assisted. He took for the text of his eloquent panegyric the Scriptural passage, "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so doth my soul pant after Thee, my God." The press of St. Louis paid the following tribute to the beloved dead:

The venerable and beloved Mother is gone. He who remunerates his servants according to their works called her in His own time. If a reward is promised to the cup of cold water given for the sake of Jesus, will not hers be exceedingly great? Full of holiness in life, her death was that of those who are called "blessed." During the painful, lingering illness, as the parting hour drew near, it was edifying as well as consoling to those who had the happiness of beholding the end of the devoted woman, of the saintly religious—the perfect detachment from the world, the entire resignation to the will of God, the firm hope, the charity without an alloy of earth to deprive it of its merits. The funeral on the ninth presented a scene that Catholics cannot easily forget. After the solemn High Mass, the Most Reverend Archbishop preached, addressing himself to the spiritual children of Mother Celestine. While he encouraged them, he paid a most beautiful tribute to the memory of the deceased; and as he spoke, so earnestly and so simply eloquent, the tears of the many who were present told how much she was beloved. As the ceremonies concluded, the procession moved slowly toward the grave. The cross-bearer, the students of the ecclesiastical seminary, the coffin borne by the Sisters, the long train of religious, the young ladies of the academy, nearly one hundred in all; and finally, crowds of citizens, each as if some dear friend were dead. The solemn chants were over, the last prayers were said, the clay fell upon the coffin, and the spiritual children poured forth their grief around

their Mother's grave—then all retired from the sacred place each one feeling the truth of what is written: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!" [21]

[21] Newspaper clipping. Name and date not preserved.

CHAPTER IX

PERIOD OF REORGANIZATION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT PAPAL APPROBATION (1858–1867)

THE establishment of a Generalate was finally brought about by Reverend Mother Saint John Facemaz. The election of a successor to the revered Mother Celestine took place on June 19, ten days after her interment. It was presided over by Archbishop Kenrick and resulted in the choice of Mother Seraphine Coughlin, at that time Superior in St. Paul. She had made her novitiate in Carondelet, where she recived the habit in 1846, had filled several offices of trust in the Congregation before her appointment to the northern missions, and was much loved and esteemed by all who knew her. To the disappointment of all, she declined the responsible position now offered her. In her humble estimate of herself, she pleaded inability, representing at the same time the delicate state of her health. A few months previous to the election, St. Paul had lost Bishop Crétin, whose death occurred in February, 1857. Monsignor Ravoux, Administrator, supported the petition of Mother Seraphine, feeling that her presence in the North would facilitate matters in a time so critical for the bereaved diocese. The Archbishop of St. Louis, to whom these representations were made, accepted her resignation, and exercising his right as Ecclesiastical Superior, appointed in her stead, Mother Saint John Facemaz. The wisdom of his selection was manifested by subsequent events.

The new Superior was cast in the heroic mold of martyrs and ascetics. She would have been to St. Jerome had she lived in his day, a disciple after his own heart. When the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Annecy were beginning their missionary labors in India in 1848, she burned with the desire of accompanying them. Here was a chance of saving souls, of suffering, of possible

MOTHER SAINT JOHN FACEMAZ
1824–1901

martyrdom. Overlooked by her superiors on that occasion, she accepted the martyrdom of silent, unreasoning obedience, daily observance of the smallest duties, and the constant lifting of the commonplace into the plane of the supernatural that characterized her through life. Sent to the aid of the American missions in 1854, she embraced with enthusiasm the opportunity offered, as she thought, of extending the Kingdom of God to the benighted pagans of the New World.

"Your child, exiled in a strange land for the good of souls," she called herself in writing to the Holy Father, Pius IX, to whom she was reverently devoted, and whose sorrows bore upon her as a personal grief. In the exercise of her authority, she countenanced no half measures, but expected of all a generous spirit of sacrificing everything, even as she herself had done. She had piercing dark eyes, set deep under a broad and prominent forehead, and their quick glance detected every remissness; but she never failed to notice the last sign of weariness or suffering, and such occasions revealed the deep tenderness of her nature. To these qualities were added a shrewd and practical business instinct, and a talent for organization that was soon felt in the Congregation.

From her arrival in America, she was closely associated with Mother Celestine, and at the time of the latter's death, was senior member of the Council at the Mother House. As such, she was actively interested in the plan for the adoption of general government. She was preparing to carry this matter to completion, when a further postponement was occasioned by an unfortunate incident which also put to the test her strong spirit of fortitude. On the morning of January 21, 1858, a fire of unknown origin broke out in the basement of the convent, and before being discovered, had made such headway that the destruction of at least a great part of the building was evident from the first.

The methods of the Carondelet fire department were still rather primitive; but the firemen, reinforced by many of the citizens and by the faculty and students of the ecclesiastical Seminary,

who worked heroically under the direction of Father Feehan, succeeded in saving the north wing, in which were located the principal departments of the academy. A relic of Saint Agnes was placed in the corner stone of this wing when it was built by Mother Celestine in 1840; and the Sisters piously believed that through the young martyr's intercession came the favorable wind that directed the flames southward. These encircled the log cabin convent in their fury, and the only visible link connecting Saint Joseph's with pioneer days disappeared.

No kindness could exceed that shown during the ensuing days by friends and neighbors, who provided for every temporary want, with special solicitude for Mother Saint John and Sister Antoinette. Both of these were seriously ill at the time the fire occurred; and while flames raged below, they were lifted through second story windows and carried to places of safety. The boarders living in St. Louis and nearby places returned to their homes temporarily; but the day school was continued almost without interruption in a large store building on Broadway given for the purpose by the Poupeney family. A time of great misfortune is a time of general sympathy and helpfulness. This the Sisters experienced, and were proud and happy to see a new convent arise in a short time, following the lines of the old, a hollow square built around a spacious court. This first great disaster at Carondelet entailed heavy financial burdens, and called for a renewal in practice of the self-denying and generous spirit of the pioneers. It gave new zest to the desire of all for a closer union of the communities, in view of the greater strength that would result therefrom.

The time was not yet ripe for this; and in the meantime, in the summer of 1858, two mission bands, the first sent out by Mother Saint John, went from Carondelet, one to Oswego, the earliest established in the diocese of Albany; the other to Sainte Genevieve, Missouri. Father St. Cyr was pastor in Sainte Genevieve, situated sixty miles below Saint Louis, the oldest permanent settlement in Upper Louisiana. The church records there date

back to 1760, but the town was colonized much earlier, some say 1735, by immigrants from Kaskaskia and other French villages of western Illinois. Its first site, a low-lying tract along the river, was abandoned in 1785, the memorable "year of the great waters," when an overflow of the Mississippi drove the settlers to higher ground.

Many elements mingled in the population of Sainte Genevieve, which had passed successively under three governments, French, Spanish, and American. Among its citizens of 1858 were Americans of more than local repute; but it still retained the character and spirit of its original inhabitants, and oldtime French courtesy and customs prevailed. The government was patriarchal; the church lands—the gift of the French monarchy—were divided into arpents and cultivated in common. Simplicity and refinement characterized the life of this Catholic settlement, where traditions lingered of the early Jesuit missionaries, of Du Bourg and Flaget, Rosati and De Andreis; and where an industrious and happy people had early interested themselves in matters educational, and prided themselves on being fellow citizens of Audubon. An academy for boys and young men was incorporated under a board of trustees in 1808; and in 1837, a similar school for girls was commenced by the Sisters of Loretto. These were withdrawn before 1858, and Father St. Cyr begged of Mother Saint John teachers to replace them.

In response to this request, Sisters Gonzaga Grand, Bridget Burke, Theodora McCormack, Clemence Motschman, Dorothea Rufine and Dosithea Grand left Carondelet August 28, and reached Sainte Genevieve by boat the same day. From the landing at the foot of the village's main street, they looked upon an attractive rural scene. Grouped about the old stone church as a center were the low white houses with gabled roofs, broad verandas, and outside chimneys built from the ground. The gardens were bright with late summer flowers, and elm and pecan trees shaded the graveled roads. Opposite the church, in a cultivated plot of several acres, was the convent, a large frame

building; and nearby stood the quaint dwelling of Felix Vallé, son of Don François Vallé, last Spanish commandant of Sainte Genevieve. Felix Vallé and his estimable wife were generous benefactors of the new academy, which, under the patronage of St. Francis de Sales, drew boarders from the surrounding towns, and day pupils from the oldest families in the state.

The Superior, Sister Gonzaga, one of the four Sisters who had come from France in 1854, was an accomplished woman of striking personality and dignified bearing. An habitual reserve gave her the appearance of sternness; but in reality covered a great sweetness and gentleness of character, as well as a delightful sense of humor that relieved of awkwardness many an otherwise embarrassing situation. She quickly endeared herself to the kindly villagers, and pupils and parents were her devoted friends. Her régime was short, however; she returned to Carondelet in 1860, though not before the academy was well launched on its long and prosperous career.

It was early in that year that Mother Saint John, acting on the advice of Archbishop Kenrick, took up and brought to a successful issue the movement for general government, inaugurated by Mother Celestine in 1856, but twice interrupted by events of more than passing moment to the Sisters in Carondelet. She invited representatives from each house of the Congregation to an assembly at Carondelet for the purpose of considering the proposed measure for general government. Delegates came as requested from each diocese in which the Sisters of Saint Joseph were established except Buffalo, Philadelphia and Brooklyn. After a spiritual retreat of three days in which all the Sisters joined, they were formally assembled on May 2, by Archbishop Kenrick, who submitted his plan for their consideration. This, as previously outlined in a "memorandum" prepared for distribution and in letters to Mother Saint John, proposed to adopt the form of government "lately agreed on by the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the Diocese of Lyons, with such modifications as may

be deemed necessary to render it available in the United States and Canada." [1]

It suggested the immediate erection of three provinces, one of St. Louis, comprising all the houses of that diocese and those in the West; a province for Canada, another for the Eastern States, and "the future erection of provinces wherever there shall be three houses of the community, if the Superior-General of the Community at Carondelet shall approve of the measure." [2] The memorandum then explains in detail the manner in which these provinces are to be erected and governed, the novitiates—one in each province—organized, and the Superior-General and Provincials elected. In an elaboration of his plan submitted May 2, 1862, to Reverend Joseph Melcher,[3] his Vicar-General and spiritual Father at that time of the Sisters in St. Louis, the Archbishop noted the absence of delegates from Buffalo, Philadelphia and Brooklyn, which, he wrote,

> may be taken as equivalent to a refusal to accept the proposition made to them.[4] Still I deem it very likely that when the matter is represented to them as forming them into a distinct province, they will accede to the measure. Should none of the dioceses outside that of St. Louis be willing to adopt these regulations, but prefer to remain as they are, then I would advise the communities in the diocese of St. Louis to organize on the above plan, and I have every confidence that sooner or later, their example will be followed by others.

With the exception of a few minor modifications made by the Sisters and agreed to by the Archbishop, his proposals were accepted practically as outlined, by the Sisters in the dioceses of St. Louis, St. Paul, Natchez and Albany, where a mission had

[1] *Letter* of Apr. 30, 1860.

[2] *Ibid.*, also of May 2, 1860.

[3] Later, Bishop of Green Bay.

[4] It was the Bishops in these diocese who intervened, preferring autonomy for their respective communities. The Sisters whose Mother House is in Philadelphia, adopted general government in 1890, and now have many flourishing institutions in the Archdioceses of Philadelphia and Baltimore.

recently been established.[5] On the afternoon of May 4, an election of officers, presided over by Archbishop Kenrick and following the regulations which he had laid down, resulted in the choice of Mother Saint John Facemaz as Superior-General for a term of six years. St. Paul was made the center of a northern province, including all the houses of the Congregation in Minnesota; and Troy, New York, was later selected as the seat of an eastern province. It now remained to secure the approbation of the Holy See for the Congregation in the United States under its new form of Government.

This was not finally accomplished for several years, but the initial step towards it was taken by Mother Saint John during a visit which she made to Europe for this purpose after her election. Another object of this visit was to secure help in repairing the great losses sustained by the Mother House in the fire of 1858. Her companion for the voyage was Sister Victorine, who had come from France in 1856, and after four years of excellent work in the academy as teacher and organist, now desired to return to her native land. Two other members of the party that left Carondelet in the middle of July, 1860, were Sister Philomene Billex and Sister Flavia Waldron. These were appointed for Cohoes, New York, where the second mission in the diocese of Albany was being inaugurated. The four Sisters reached Cohoes July 17, and Mother Saint John with her companion stayed several days at this mission before resuming her journey. She remained abroad until the following spring, visiting the houses of the Congregation in Europe. While in Moutiers, where she spent several months, she received a communication from Archbishop Kenrick, who desired her on her arrival in Rome to present to Pope Pius a personal letter which

[5] A diocesan community was inaugurated in Corsica, Pennsylvania, in 1860 by Mother Agnes Spencer, who had been in the Buffalo diocese since 1854. In 1897, this community established its Mother House at Erie, Pennsylvania. From Brooklyn, diocesan communities were introduced into the Archdiocese of Boston in 1873, and into the dioceses of Springfield, Massachusetts in 1873, and Burlington, Vermont in 1880.

he enclosed, "a supplication on my part, that the Sovereign Pontiff may deign to give his approbation to your Holy Rule." [6]

Taking with her Sister M. de Chantal Martin, one of five young sisters who were to accompany her to Carondelet on her return, Mother Saint John left by way of Marseilles for Rome, where she was welcomed early in March by the Sisters of St. Joseph at their convent near the Colosseum. From Cardinal Bizzari, later one of the officials of the Vatican Council, she received many favors during her sojourn in Rome. An audience with the Holy Father was arranged, and took place immediately after Easter, which fell on March 31 that year. Both Sisters were deeply moved by the graciousness of the Sovereign Pontiff, whose first inquiry was for his "good children in America." [7] He received Mother Saint John's petition, encouraged her to look for its favorable outcome, and ordered an examination of the Constitutions by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

As a result of this investigation and of commendatory letters addressed to the Holy See by Bishop McCloskey of Albany, afterwards first American Cardinal, Bishops Duggan of Chicago, Grace of St. Paul, Juncker of Alton, and Archbishop Kenrick, as well as a personal letter from the latter to His Holiness, the following Decree of Commendation was issued:

When in 1836 the Right Reverend Joseph Rosati governed the Diocese of St. Louis in the United States of North America, he invited some Sisters of St. Joseph from the city of Lyons (France) to establish themselves there, and assigned the town of Carondelet, near the city of St. Louis, as the place of their residence. The number of Sisters of St. Joseph in that region has, however, so much increased as at present to be found in several dioceses and to have many houses. The house which the Sisters inhabited in the aforesaid town of Carondelet is constituted the first house of the Institute, called of Carondelet. The Sisters are placed under the rule of a Mother-General; after two years of noviceship they make

[6] *Letter* of Jan. 26, 1861.

[7] SISTER M. DE CHANTAL, *Notes of Roman Journey.*

simple vows of perpetual chastity, poverty and obedience; and besides laboring for their own sanctification, they instruct girls, in a special manner, in Christian piety, and also employ themselves in Orphan Asylums and Hospitals. The Superior-General, who at present governs the aforesaid Institute, has petitioned our Most Holy Lord, Pope Pius the Ninth, that he might vouchsafe to approve of the Constitutions of that Congregation, for which purpose also the Most Reverend Archbishop of St. Louis and other Bishops have united their suffrages. In an audience had on the 21st of August 1863, by the undersigned Pro-Secretary of Bishops and Regulars, His Holiness, benignly receiving the petition of the aforesaid Superior, and considering the letters of the said Prelates, praised and commended in strongest terms, the said Institute called St. Joseph of Carondelet as a Congregation of simple vows under the rule of a Superior-General, saving the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries, conformably to the prescriptions of the Sacred canons and Apostolic Constitutions; and also by the present decree, he praises and commends it, the approbation of the Constitutions being, however, deferred to a more fitting time. Given at Rome, from the Secretariat of the aforesaid Sacred Congregations of Bishops and Regulars on the 9th day of September, 1863.[8]

This Decree was signed by Cardinal Quaglia, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation, who in a separate letter of the same date quoted the custom of that body, which required that the Constitutions be reduced to practice for some years, and be then resubmitted under the same conditions as before. The reception of the Decree was the occasion of general rejoicing among the Sisters. The prayers that had been offered by the community for this end were continued for another period of four years. In 1867, a second step was taken toward the attainment of the desired object. For seven years, since 1860, general government had been in successful operation, and had proved the principle that "union makes strength, and strength means an increase of efficiency and capacity for greater good, as well as power for overcoming difficulties and opposition in the various trials of

[8] Original Latin decree in Archives at the Mother House.

life."[9] The time seemed opportune for another appeal to the Holy See. To the preceding list of petitioners, Bishops Conroy of Albany, Feehan of Nashville, Elder of Natchez, Hennessey of Dubuque, and Baraga of Marquette added their names, each sending a commendatory letter.

The summer of 1867 found Mother Saint John again in the Holy City. Her companion was Sister Julia Littenecker. They had embarked at New York on May 9, after a brief visitation of the Eastern convents, which at this time numbered ten. Their voyage lasted thirteen days, ten of which were spent on the Atlantic, and three on the Mediterranean. For eight weeks they were the guests in Rome of the Sisters of St. Joseph at their convent near the Gesù. Their private audience with the Holy Father occurred on Ascension Day, May 30. A week later, on June 7, he gave his approval to the Congregation. His Eminence, Cardinal Barnado was appointed first Cardinal Protector,[10] and the following Decree was issued:

In an audience given on the 7th day of June, 1867, to the Secretary of this Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, His Holiness, Pope Pius IX, in consideration of the commendatory letters of the Prelates in those places where the pious association is established, and of the abundant fruits which the same has yielded, approved the aforesaid pious Institute, called the Sisters of St. Joseph, . . . and he furthermore confirmed, by way of trial for ten years, the preceding constitutions, written in the French language, for the therein-stated pious Institute, such as they are found in this copy, whereof the autograph is reserved in the archives of the aforesaid Sacred Congregation; and His Holiness does, by the authority of the present Decree, approve and confirm the same.

Given at Rome, at the Secretariat of the same Sacred Congregation, on the third day of July, 1867.

A. Cardinal Quaglia.

Constitutions, p. 19. St. Louis, 1900.

[10] Others who have borne this relation to the Congregation are Cardinals Franchi, Simeoni, Satolli, Falconio, Martinelli, and the present Protector, Cardinal Gasquet.

The Decree of Final Approbation was given by the Sacred Congregation at the expiration of the ten years, May 16, 1877. To it, Pope Pius IX, of glorious memory, added a special Brief. In this Brief, after sanctioning and confirming the Constitutions, he says:

We give to them the inviolable strength of our supreme power. . . . We further decree that our present letter is and shall be firm, valid and efficacious, and obtain and possess its full and entire effects, and most fully support the said Sisters of St. Joseph at present and at future times, and thus it should be judged and defined in the premises by every judge, and even by delegated auditors of causes of the Apostolic palace; and that it is invalid and void if it happens that anything be otherwise attempted, knowingly or ignorantly in these matters by any one in virtue of any authority whatever.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, under the Fisherman's Ring, the 31st of July, 1877, the 32nd year of our Pontificate.

CARDINAL ASQUINI.

Two other Briefs [11] were issued by the Holy Father during May, one granting the privileged altars in all chapels of the Congregation; and the other, numerous indulgences "to the Sisters and all women who dwell with them" under the usual conditions.

Many interesting incidents were connected with the different visits of the Sisters to Europe in pursuit of the great object now so happily attained. Events of unusual importance in the history of the Church were taking place there in the decade preceding the Italian occupation of Rome, and Mother Saint John and her companion were witnesses of more than one inspiring scene. They renewed old friendships in France and Savoy, and made new and valuable acquaintances in Rome. Among the latter was a friend of the Roman communities of St. Joseph, the March-

[11] Latin originals of all the above documents in Carondelet Archives.

ioness Ferrari, an Italian noblewoman, whose brother, Monsignor Joseph Ferrari, was Treasurer of the Papal States. It was through the influence of this distinguished prelate that Mother Saint John obtained during her first visit the body of the child martyr, St. Aurelia. This was taken from the cemetery of St. Callixtus in the Catacombs during the pontificate of Pius IX and placed in his private chapel. The document accompanying it bears the date April 8, 1861, and mentions it as the gift of that Pontiff to Mother St. John for the chapel at the Mother House in Carondelet.[12]

The year 1867 was a memorable one in Rome. Though the Church in other parts of Italy had been deprived of its independence, and revolutionary bands were even then preparing to invade the Papal dominions, the month of June, in which was celebrated the eighteenth centenary of the martyrdom of Saints Peter and Paul, was devoted to religious celebrations of such splendor as had never before been seen even in the City of the Popes. On the invitation of Pius IX, bishops and prelates had assembled from all over the Christian world to participate in the solemn ceremonies. These began on the feast of Corpus Christi, June 20, and ended with the beatification on July 7 of more than two hundred missionaries, martyred for the faith in Japan. On the centenary itself, June 28, the Holy Father celebrated in St. Peter's the solemn pontifical Mass following the canonization of St. Paul of the Cross, founder of the Passionist Order; St. Leonard of Port Maurice, a Franciscan missionary; Germaine Cousin, shepherdess of Toulouse; and twenty-two other confessors of the Faith.[13] Sister Julia wrote from Rome:

[12] By favor of the Holy See granted June 1, 1867, the feast of St. Aurelia is celebrated annually on May 31 in the chapel of the Mother House with the Mass of Virgins and Martyrs.

[13] St. Josephat Kuncievicz, Archbishop of Polotsk; Pedro de Arbues of Saragossa, an Augustinian friar; Maria Francesca, a Tertiary of St. Peter Alcantara; and nineteen martyrs of Gorcum, in Holland, who suffered in the persecutions of the 16th century.

The feast of Corpus Christi was magnificent. The crowd assembled before the basilica of St. Peter was so great that the soldiers had difficulty forming a passage for the procession. Seventeen different communities of men, seven choirs of canons belonging to the principal basilicas in the Holy City, the students of several colleges, over three hundred Bishops, the Cardinals, the Senate of the city of Rome, the guard of Nobles in their gala unforms, the Swiss guards, all preceded the Holy Father, who carried the Blessed Sacrament, and was himself carried on the shoulders of twelve *palefreniers* under a beautiful canopy. Different companies of soldiers went before and after. The Swiss, who are the immediate body-guard of the Pope, were arrayed in iron armour, with their ancient battle-axes on their shoulders. The procession at the ceremony of canonization was something similar to that of Corpus Christi. . . . His Holiness offered up the sacrifice of the Mass on the high altar erected over the tomb of St. Peter. We had the privilege of occupying a little gallery opposite the altar, and were thus *vis-a-vis* to the Sovereign Pontiff. His sweet and powerful voice, while he was singing Mass, was reëchoed in the mighty dome above.[14]

Sister Julia, an excellent musician, was much impressed with the choir—hundreds of voices singing in three divisions to represent the church militant, suffering, and triumphant—which filled the vast edifice with waves of wondrous sound. A few days before their departure from Rome, the Sisters met at the Gesù the Provincial of the St. Louis Province of Jesuits, Father Coosemans, who was much pleased to learn of the success of their mission, and who made them acquainted with the illustrious General of the Society, Very Reverend Peter Beckx. "He gave us his blessing," writes Sister Julia, "and promised us a share in his holy prayers. Just as we stepped out of the Gesù a few minutes later, the Holy Father passed in his carriage. We dropped on our knees, and he gave us his benediction." Conditions had so far changed before their return to the Holy City ten years later, that, although the faithful were celebrating the

[14] *Letter* dated July 17, 1867.

SISTER JULIA LITTENECKER
1836–1913

golden jubilee of the episcopate of Pius IX, Mother Agatha could write of the ceremonies in the great basilica of Rome:

They are not so gloriously grand as when our saintly Pontiff made his appearance in public. He never officiates as of old at St. Peter's. We attended High Mass at St. John Lateran's on Easter Sunday. All the ceremonies of Holy Week were performed there, and we had the good fortune to be placed in one of the balconies over the choir occupied by the canons, so that we were almost in the sanctuary. All was to me, very fine; but Mother St. John says it was not what used to be witnessed at St. Peter's when our Holy Father pontificated.[15]

When Mother Saint John and Sister Julia left Rome on July 17, 1867, they repaired to Lyons, where a delightful week passed quickly among the Sisters at the Mother House. After a short time spent in Chambéry, they went to Moutiers and joined the community in their annual retreat during the first week in October. Their itinerary included Strasburg, Freiburg and Offenburg, and from Paris a brief visit was made to Madame de la Rochejaquelin at her home in Ussé. The latter, hearing of the presence in Europe of Sisters from Carondelet, had sent pressing invitations, begging them not to leave for America without seeing her. In her long and interesting letter, she reviewed the history of her connection with the Sisters of Saint Joseph and their foundation in St. Louis. From St. Aubin de Beaubigné she wrote:

I had no doubt, whatever, but that God would shed abundant blessings on the small beginning. You may judge how I desire to see you and to hear from your own lips all the details of your interesting missions, and especially of Carondelet.

It makes me very sad to think how much our dear pioneers suffered, and that they did not write to tell me of their privations. With what readiness would I not have come to their assistance! I would like much to know if your Sisters are in New Orleans.

[15] *Letter* dated Apr. 20, 1877.

I knew Monsignor Odin intimately. I knew him at Rome, and saw him again at Paris when he was Bishop of Galveston. . . . The community at Lyons would be enraptured to see you, and hear you tell of the prodigious development of the little grain of mustard seed sown in 1836. As for myself, I desire passionately to see you. You will surely not disappoint me by refusing. If you come, you will give me infinite joy. We will talk about all your establishments, and I will mark them on my map of the United States. I knew Mother St. John (Fontbonne) at Lyons, the admirable Sister St. John of Chambéry, and now the good God wishes that I should know you, so that you may teach me to serve, love and glorify him.[16]

The visit of the Sisters gave great pleasure to this distinguished lady, who renewed her benefactions to the Congregation, and kept up her correspondence with Carondelet for many years.[17] A protégé of hers, Louise Ouvrard from La Vendée, afterwards Sister Felicia, was one of three postulants who accompanied the Superior-General from France. Other members of the Congregation who came to America at the same time included Mother Saint John's own sister, Sister Irene, who had spent six years on the Roman missions, and her niece, Sister Mary Joseph.

Leaving Paris on October 24, 1867, Mother Saint John and her companions reached Carondelet before the middle of November. They had as a companion of their sea voyage Bishop Amat of Los Angeles, who, early in the following year, begged Mother Saint John to send some Sisters to his diocese. To her great regret she was obliged to refuse this request, as well as several others made at the same time,[18] the reason in each case being the same. The field was too great for the number of laborers;

[16] *Letter* dated July 19, 1867. Her title at this time was Duchesse de la Rochejaquelin.

[17] Her death occurred at Ussé January 7, 1883. Among her last bequests was one to her "dear Sisters in America," made through the Director of the Seminary for Foreign Missions at Paris, with the request that prayers be offered for her soul. *Letter* of A. MAURY, Paris, Jan. 24, 1884.

[18] These came from Father Van Queckelberge of Port Gibson, Mississippi; Father Scully, of Cambridgeport, Massachusetts; and Father Daley, of Sterling, Illinois.

the professed members were barely sufficient for the work in hand. Far from being a matter of discouragement, the numerous calls from distant fields, though so often made in vain, gave testimony to the good work accomplished everywhere, and lent weight to the prediction made by Father Coosemans to the Sisters in Rome, that the sanction of their institute by the Holy See would produce innumerable blessings.

The blessings came in the next few years in increased numbers; in the prestige arising from efficiency; in greater devotion—if that were possible—shown by the Sisters to the holy cause in which they were engaged. The Decree of the Holy See was announced in an assembly of Superiors summoned by Mother Saint John to the Mother House shortly after her return from Rome.[19] It was an occasion of much rejoicing, and of many expressions of gratitude to the Holy Father. The name of Pius IX has since been held in special veneration by the community of Carondelet, who welcomed with delight his choice of their patron in 1870 as Protector of the universal Church. His afflictions caused them profound sorrow, and drew forth a letter of sympathy signed by the Superior-General in the name of the entire Congregation, which numbered three hundred and forty professed members and one hundred novices, in three provinces. To this letter the Holy Father made reply as follows:

To His Dear Daughters in Christ, Greeting and Apostolic Benediction.

Your letters of the 12th of last February have given us a glorious testimony of your faith and charity; they have made known to us your devotedness and respect as well as that of all the Sisters in the three provinces of your Congregation.

We cannot entertain the least doubt, dear Daughters in Christ,

[19] The first General Chapter was convened the following year, 1869. Besides the Superior-General and Provincials there were eleven elected members present: Sisters Delphine Bray, Euphemia Murray, M. Gabriel Corbett, Stanislaus Saul, Angela Hanner, Tatiana Merrick, Mary Joseph Kennedy, Melanie Brew, Seraphine Ireland, Teresa Struckhof, M. Basil Morris.

that, as you manifest in the said letters, you are deeply affected at seeing the injuries and persecutions to which the Church is subjected. But what we esteem as most praiseworthy is that in order to make reparation for these injuries, animated with a fervent zeal, you have resolved to work more earnestly for your sanctification, and to fulfill with more fidelity the duties of your vocation and institute.

May the Almighty confirm in you these good resolutions and protect you; may His grace be with you, that all your holy intentions may be crowned with abundant fruit. But that the hopes which you express to us for the peace and tranquility of the Church may be the sooner realized, cease not fervently to implore the Divine clemency, calling on the intercession of Saint Joseph, the most powerful patron of the Church, under whose patronage you happily and safely rest.

Finally, may the Apostolic benediction which we cordially give in the Lord, to you, to all the Sisters of your Congregation, as well as to the pupils under your care, be the pledge of our special benevolence and the source of all Heavenly graces.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, the 27th day of March, 1872, the 26th year of our Pontificate.

PIUS P. P. IX [20]

[20] Original in Latin in Carondelet Archives.

CHAPTER X

THE EXPANSION OF THE CONGREGATION UNDER REVEREND MOTHER SAINT JOHN FACEMAZ (1860–1872)

Reverend Mother Saint John Facemaz served two terms as Superior-General of the Congregation, being elected to that position a second time in 1866. When she laid down the burden of office in 1872, the houses under her jurisdiction numbered thirty-seven. These were located in Missouri, Illinois, Michigan, Florida, Tennessee, Arizona, Minnesota and New York. The two last named each constituted a distinct province under the immediate direction of its own provincial superior.

In her own province, she rarely accepted a school or proposed institution without a preliminary visit to satisfy herself as to its desirability or its needs; and she kept herself in close personal touch with all the missions established. The long journeys which this necessitated were frequently attended with difficulties owing to imperfect modes of travel, and always resulted in great bodily fatigue; but hers was not the nature to complain, especially when there was question of promoting the cause of charity or education. Neither did her long absences from home cause any diminution of her zeal for the common welfare of the Sisters or for the training of the young religious to fit them for their future work among the little ones of Christ. With love of poverty and renunciation, she endeavored to instill into all a devoted loyalty to the Holy See. This was the key-note of her conferences to the Sisters, the submission due on their part as daughters of the Church to its least decree. Although esteeming herself the most unworthy, she could give a good account of her own stewardship as Superior-General; and in the management of her Congregation, she proved herself always the valiant woman, "who hath looked

well to the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle." [1]

In 1859, she made arrangements for the opening of St. Bridget's Orphan Asylum in St. Louis to which the orphan girls were removed from St. Vincent's. St. Bridget's parochial school, commenced the following year, was attended by Sisters residing at the asylum. On her return from abroad in May 1861, the Civil War had broken out, and St. Louis was under martial law with General Harney in command. On the very day of her arrival, May 22, his proclamation appeared, calling on the citizens to resume their ordinary business pursuits, interrupted in the general disturbance following the capture on May 10 of Camp Jackson.[2] Awaiting her in Carondelet was Sister Leonie Martin, who had come from Sulphur Springs to meet her sister, Sister M. de Chantal, one of the five accompanying Mother Saint John from France. Sister Leonie represented conditions in Mississippi. When that state seceded from the Union in January, 1861, there was no delusion in the South as to the long duration of the coming contest, and most of the boarders at the convent of Our Lady of the Woods had returned to their homes before the close of the school term. One, Louise Du Bernard, who accompanied Sister Leonie, remained at the academy in St. Louis until the close of the struggle.

In vacation, Mother St. John recalled the remaining Sisters from Mississippi for an indefinite period. They bade farewell to their southern friends and neighbors, and said a last prayer over the grass-grown graves of Sister Cecilia Renot and Sister Scholastica Vasques. Sister Scholastica was one of the pioneers of St. Paul. Her health failing there, she was sent to the more genial climate of Mississippi in the vain hope that her life might be saved; but she had soon found a permanent resting place under southern skies. Many heart-rending scenes attended the de-

[1] *Proverbs* XXXI, 27.

[2] This was located in the open country on what is now the block between Laclede and Olive Sts. on Grand Ave.

parture of the Sisters, some poor negroes even clinging to them and begging to be taken along.

Owing to the blockading of the Mississippi and all routes of travel southward, the Sisters were obliged to entrain for Louisville, Kentucky, where alone they could make railroad connections with St. Louis. They reached Carondelet August 5, if not secessionists in fact, Southerners in sympathy, for they had not found their passage through the Union lines pleasant. "We were looked upon and treated as spies," wrote Sister Mary Louis Lynch. "When we arrived at the dividing line, soldiers in uniform came hurriedly into the car, opened our trunks and baggage, and even examined our lunch basket. They took a sealed letter which Sister had written to her home, opened and examined it carefully." The letter was Sister Emerentia Bonnefoy's; and as it was written in French, it was passed from one official to another, until, to the writer's great amusement, it was finally returned to her, evidently undeciphered.

The Sisters did not return to Mississippi. Among the priests called to the front as army chaplains was their pastor, Father Guillon, whose death occurred at Natchez early in 1863, the result of hardship and exposure. Letters of Bishop Elder to Mother Saint John in 1863 and 1864 told sadly the desolation of Sulphur Springs and other parts of his afflicted diocese, left without priests, business prostrated and labor stopped, "the melancholy consequences of war." [3] Projected missions at other southern points were also interfered with by the great struggle, among these, Opelousas, Louisiana, where Father G. Raymond, a former president of St. Mary's College in Baltimore, with only two assistants had under his charge the immense parishes of Opelousas and Calcassieu numbering from fifteen to eighteen thousand Catholics.[4] He had erected an academy for boys, an academy and day school for girls, and had in

[3] *Letter* dated Sept. 5, 1863.

[4] *Father Raymond to Archbishop Kenrick,* Nov. 15, 1860. *Carondelet Archives.*

view an institution for the care of orphans. On the advice of Bishop Odin, he had applied to Mother Saint John to provide teachers for the girls' schools. He wrote to Archbishop Kenrick:

> My reasons for wishing to have Sisters of St. Joseph are, from information received, 1st. Because these excellent Sisters are very pious, full of zeal, animated with a spirit of Christian simplicity and disinterestedness; 2nd. Because their rule embraces academies, free schools and establishments of charity, which is just what we want; 3rd. Because the terms in their academies are moderate which is absolutely necessary in our case.[5]

Pressing as was the need of workers in this vast, uncultivated field, it could not be filled under wartime conditions; and Mother Saint John turned her attention eastward, where, during 1861 and 1862, Troy, Albany, Syracuse, Binghamton and Saratoga, all in the diocese of Albany, sought and obtained communities from Carondelet. The Sisters here were called in 1861 to mourn the death of Sister Philomene Vilaine, second of the pioneers of 1836 to be called to her reward. *Ma Soeur,* as she was affectionately known to all, was a great favorite in the Congregation, which she edified by her simplicity and guilelessness. She was one of the band sent to St. Paul in 1851, had begun the school at St. Anthony, Minnesota in 1854, and returned in 1860 to the Mother House at Carondelet, where her "life of daily dying to nature was crowned with a death precious in the sight of God."[6] "I have never done any good," she was accustomed to say in her humility; while those about her, who could not but witness her continual acts of self-denial, looked on her virtue as heroic. She was always deeply moved by the sufferings of others; and it seemed a special kindness on the part of the Master whom she had served so well, when He called her to Himself so early in the struggle, the sounds of which at least must have reached her ears had she lived.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Necrology of the Sisters of St. Joseph,* 1861.

The attendance at the academy was not appreciably lessened in the fall of 1861, though a few pupils whose homes were in the South were unable to return. A design on the part of the military authorities to secure the convent building for war purposes was checked by the timely interference of friends, and studies and other community activities went on as usual. Both Sisters and students found an outlet for their charity while battle raged in the Southland and the wounded were brought into St. Louis, in plying their needles for the various aid societies, and in doling out food to poor families whose bread winners were at the front. The number of these families amounted at times to forty who daily received assistance at the convent. A public spirited citizen of Carondelet, the Honorable Henry T. Blow, a former United States Minister to Brazil, expressed his own appreciation of these services by a gift to the convent of a valuable painting, an original of Paul Veronese, "The Sacrifice of Abraham." He had brought the painting from Spain, and considered it, he said, a most appropriate gift for religious, who, like Isaac, had offered their lives on the altar of obedience. The presentation was made in eloquent words by Judge Wilson Primm,[7] whose daughter Jacqueline was a former pupil at the academy.

Until 1863, the academy was under the direction of Sister Tecla Johnston, a native of Devonshire, England, an accomplished and capable woman, loved by Sisters and pupils. Her special talent showed itself in literary composition; and some good productions came from her pen in the form of religious plays for girls, which were enacted by the students at the annual commencements. Her inclination for a contemplative life, however, led her to sever her connection with the Congregation and return to England, where she entered a cloister. She was succeeded by Sister Winifred Sullivan.

Sister Winifred was young, but she had the cultured mind

[7] Early historian of St. Louis, and one of the founders of the Missouri Historical Society.

of mature years. Born in Ireland, she was a convert to the Church, and was educated by the Ursulines of St. Martin's, Brown County, Ohio. Her whole life was an act of gratitude for the gift of faith, and a radiation of the joyousness of living for God. A close and enthusiastic student of history, she became a teacher *par excellence* of that branch of knowledge; and in summer institutes with the Sisters as well as in the class room among her pupils, she never failed to rouse a deep interest in her chosen subject. Her bright and cheerful disposition, ready wit and fund of amusing and edifying anecdotes enlivened many an otherwise gloomy hour for her youthful charges; and her sympathy was never exhausted by the many calls made upon it during the trying period of the war.

In return she had the love and confidence of her pupils, patriots all of them so far as appearances went, in the neat uniform of marine blue, with collar, cuffs, and apron of dainty white, and smart blue sun-bonnet for out-of-doors. There was many a youthful heart among them, however, that loved the gray and beat in sympathy with the cause which it represented, and with the sentiment that prompted some of the convent's nearest neighbors to darken their windows when the military authorities of the city ordered illuminations to celebrate a Union victory. There were boarders from the South ready to applaud the day scholars from the village who made detours on their way to school in order to avoid the streets on which the Stars and Stripes were floating, or who stepped aside so as not to pass within the shadow of the flag.

Sister Winifred's position was a delicate one, but she was tactful—the nun without a nation, to whom neutrality was not alone "the better part of valor" but a Christian duty. Difference of opinion and of interests there might be among her pupils, but there was no disunion; and all admired the courage of Margaret Picot, sprightly convent girl, who in the absence of her father, received a delegation of Federal officers. They came with the view of taking the "castle" as a base of operations

against a possible attack on St. Louis from the South. She showed them all parts of the house, not omitting the square central tower with its tempting outlook down the Mississippi; and before dismissing them, sang for their entertainment to her own accompaniment and with the spirit of her Virginian ancestors all the Confederate songs in vogue.

The officers did not return, and the castle and its environment were left undisturbed with the exception of a stray member of General Sigel's command—encamped south of the convent, near the River Des Peres—who came now and then in the disguise of a wounded man seeking help. The tragedy of Picot's Hill occurred as an aftermath of the struggle that had pitted brother against brother, and called the best of friends and neighbors to opposing sides. An ordinance of the city council in the late sixties decreed the grading of new streets in Carondelet to furnish work for the unemployed. Some of these streets were run through the hill in such a way as to make a gap thirty feet or more between the academy and Picot's Castle, and left the latter isolated on the steep bluff, the perpendicular sides of which were very close to the buildings. The convent property was depreciated in value; while the terracing of the east front and the erection of retaining walls on the north and east made a heavy drain on the home funds. Unable to make like improvements on his estate, Louis Picot was obliged to part with it. The buildings were torn down and the hill sold to the Iron Mountain Railway Company, who leveled it, using the earth to fill in some swampy places along the river for their tracks. The stretch of leveled ground lay idle many years and was finally bought by the Academy Corporation.

The sounds of war had hardly died away, when on December 8, 1865, Archbishop Kenrick presided at the first ceremony of religious profession in the new St. Joseph's chapel. The completion of this chapel marked the final stage in the erection of the building after the fire of 1858. Rigid economy on the part of the community helped towards the realization of this end. To the funds

collected by Mother Saint John in Europe, the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, interested in the works of the Congregation through the representations of Archbishop Kenrick,[8] made liberal donations between 1864 and 1866; and in William Hunt, St. Louis furnished a generous benefactor. Among the pupils of the academy were several for whose expenses the Archbishop made himself personally responsible, thus evidencing practically his interest in community affairs. In 1861, the deaf-mutes were removed to new quarters in St. Louis; and with additional room and facilities in Carondelet, Saint Joseph's continued its prosperous career under Sister Seraphine Ireland, Sister Teresa Hagar and Sister Herman Joseph O'Gorman, who were successively directresses until 1873.

A notable figure in the community activities of this early period was Ellen Fitzpatrick, or as she was always known among the Sisters, Miss Ellen. She was a native of Dublin and received abroad a thorough musical education. In 1851, she became an inmate of the convent. A physical impediment in the form of a very noticeable lameness prevented her receiving the religious habit or becoming a professed member of the Congregation; but she was happy to devote her life to it as an affiliated member and to give it the benefit of her talents. For over a quarter of a century, she served in the capacity of music teacher to the novices; and her declining years until her death in 1900, she spent in almost incessant prayer. She was a woman of strong character and deep piety, and trained her pupils well. Some of these ranked later among the most successful teachers of music in the Congregation; and were always grateful to their early instructor, who did not hesitate on occasion to use her slender black pointer on fingers that were too nimble for accuracy or too stiff for artistic execution.

Outside Carondelet, Mother Saint John's active spirit was busy all during the war period making new foundations, most

[8] *Letter of Berard des Glajeux, President of the Central Council* at *Paris* (1847–1565) to *Archbishop Kenrick,* December 20, 1864. *Carondelet Archives.*

of them lasting and all with interesting histories. Ste. Marie, in the diocese of Alton, Illinois, presented the novel situation in 1862 of employing the Sisters of St. Joseph in the public school. Sister Julia Littenecker was the zealous and edifying Superior at the convent there; and though the Sisters have long since been withdrawn, the memory of her beautiful and prayerful life still lingers, a holy tradition handed down by her former pupils to their children and grandchildren. Ste. Marie was soon represented in the Congregation by five young girls who consecrated their lives to religion between 1862 and 1869. Of these Sister Severine Miller survives. The others passed to their reward, Sister Berchmans Hartrich, who died on the mission in Arizona, being the first of the band to lay down her young life of great sacrifice and rare virtues.

At the request of Bishop Duggan of Chicago, the Sisters of St. Joseph went in April 1863 to Peoria, Illinois, then in his diocese. They were accompanied there by Father Abram J. Ryan, paster of St. Mary's, who had come to Carondelet for that purpose. In tribute to the first community, which numbered seven, the poet-priest wrote his poem *Memento,* better known by its opening lines,

Ye are seven
Brides of Heaven,
Jesus claims you as His own.
Love Him ever
Leave Him never
Till He leads you to His throne.

In a two room frame building, the Sisters began the first parochial school in Peoria, St. Mary's; and soon secured a site for an academy, also the first in that city. This was incorporated under the name of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, and was liberally patronized by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. After the erection of the see of Peoria in 1877, both schools enjoyed the patronage and the active interest of the illustrious Bishop

Spalding, and the academy rose into the prominence which it has since maintained as a leading institution of the diocese. Sisters William McDonald, Marcella Manifold, Celestine Ryan and Ursula Dunn were among the early teachers who lent prestige to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, under the able direction for many years of Sister Mechtilda Littenecker. The first in the long line of academy girls who gave themselves to God as "brides of Heaven" was Susan Crowley, Sister Teresa Louise. Even as a school girl, Sister Teresa gave promise of the talent which she later developed as a prolific writer of good prose, and of the exquisite verse with which she often delighted community audiences.[9] A little lyric, "Just One Moment," found among her papers after her death, was written in her last illness, during the whole course of which she suffered excruciating pain. As a prayer for light, the last aspiration of a dying religious it deserves reproduction:

When our Savior asked the blind man,
What his heart's request might be,
Eagerly he made the answer,
O Lord, grant that I may see.

In the Sacramental Presence
Were I asked, my heart would say,
Give my soul one lucid moment,
Ere I pass from earth away.

Show me then my life's transgressions,
And the marks those sins have made;
In Thy Precious Blood then cleanse me,
Let Thy mercy be my aid.

Just one moan of true contrition,
Just one act of perfect love,

[9] The chorus sung by five thousand school children in the St. Louis Colosseum on the golden jubilee celebration of Archbishop Kenrick in 1891 was her composition. She prepared for publication in 1886 the *Catholic Child's Letter Writer,* which for many years furnished models of epistolary correspondence to pupils in the grade schools taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Just to ask the Church triumphant
Aid me in its courts above.

Once to call on Jesus, Mary,
And Saint Joseph; oh, I pray
Grant my soul this precious moment,
Ere it pass from earth away.

In July 1864, Mother Saint John sent a community from Carondelet to begin the first parochial school in Bloomington, Illinois. "The place is pretty, and everything promises well for the future of religion," wrote on April 1, 1864, Bishop Duggan, at whose request the Sisters were sent. On his insistent demands, also, another band took charge in September of the orphan asylum in Chicago. Sister Benedict Butler was made Superior of this house, and with her community, consisting of Sisters Delphine Bray, Praxedes Gearon, Aloysius Fitzsimmons, and Marcelline O'Reilly, left St. Louis on the evening of September 24, crossing the Mississippi by ferry to entrain on the Illinois side for Chicago. They were hardly three hours out from St. Louis, when they met with one of those striking experiences ordinarily called chance, but recognized by them as an intervention of Providence. A sudden jolt brought the coach to a standstill, and the brief prayer for safety uttered aloud by Sister Delphine was echoed by her alarmed companions. Investigation showed the serious nature of their position. The spreading of rails on a soft embankment had caused the overturning of the engine and all the forward coaches, leaving that in which the Sisters and a few other passengers were, tilted at a steep angle but detached from the remainder of the wreck. Into this one coach the wounded were brought until nurses and doctors arrived from Lincoln, the nearest Illinois town. A delay of ten hours ensued, and the Sisters reached Chicago on a relief train the following day.

The asylum of which they took possession was a poor, plain building on Wabash Avenue; but two years later, in 1866, the

Bishop turned over to the Sisters and their one hundred and fifty orphan boys and girls the splendid building newly completed for the University of St. Mary of the Lake. This was ideal for the purpose, with a lake frontage of two hundred and twenty four feet, and surrounded by extensive grounds and meadow land. The asylum was in charge at this time of Sister Mary Joseph Kennedy, "good Mother Joseph," as she was known in Chicago for twenty years. Her magnanimity and indomitable courage were put to the test during the fire of October 9, 1871, which left the beautiful edifice a smoking ruin, and sent her with her community of eighteen Sisters and their two hundred and eighty charges wandering through the streets of Chicago to a place of security outside the limits of the doomed city.

When the danger became apparent to the Sisters on that fateful night, the children were roused from their dreams and dressed with difficulty, as the little ones, with sleepy eyes, curled themselves up in corners or crawled back into their tiny beds for another nap. They were finally assembled on the first floor near the chapel, from which the Blessed Sacrament had previously been removed.

At one o'clock, A. M., [runs Sister Mary Incarnation's account of the fire] the waterworks behind our property took fire, and even in our barnyard, three loads of hay, brought in the previous afternoon, were ablaze. It was time for us to leave. Each Sister took in her arms two infants. The larger boys and girls took charge of the smaller ones, and we formed a close line of march, after receiving from Mother Mary Joseph strict orders to hold on to one another. With Mother in the lead, we started northward not knowing where we were going. Mad rushing of people, some jumping through windows to save their lives, the hurrying of horses and vehicles, made it almost impossible to keep together. The greatest difficulty was at the street crossings.

One incident of many is worth relating. A team of horses was rushing towards us on the right, and one on the left. As there was danger of breaking our group, and therefore of losing some of the

children, Mother called to both drivers to halt in God's name. One did so, but the other, roused by the danger, tried to go on. Mother stepped up and took the horses by the bridle, while he continued to beat them. Passersby, seeing the situation, tore the driver from the seat, and gave him what he richly deserved. While this was going on, we seized our opportunity and got across. Imagine us trying to make our way with burning buildings on each side of us; and plank walks burning at intervals underneath. The flames crawled around the buildings like serpents.

After traveling in this way until four o'clock in the morning, we found ourselves outside the city limits on a prairie. Sheer exhaustion compelled us to rest. The sun rose that morning like a ball of fire. The ground was warm, but the children fell asleep as soon as they could find a place to lay their heads. Between eight and nine in the morning, we saw two horsemen coming towards us. As they approached, we recognized two of the Jesuits, Father O'Neill and Father Van Eyck. They were searching for the orphans. Imagine their joy and ours. They requested us to go no farther, while they would return and send two Fathers with a conveyance. At four o'clock in the afternoon, the Fathers came bringing several spring wagons and such other vehicles as they could procure, and all were taken to the College on Twelfth and May Streets. On our arrival, about eleven o'clock that night, we were welcomed most heartily by the Fathers and students, who had labored all day changing the class rooms into living apartments for the children.[10]

For two weeks they remained at the Jesuit college, while a two story frame school building near by was fitted up for a temporary home. Eighty of the smaller children were kept here by the Sisters, and offers of aid were accepted from orphan asylums in St. Louis and Cincinnati, to each of which one hundred children were sent. In May, the building formerly occupied by veteran soldiers on Thirty-fifth and Lake Streets was secured, and the scattered children brought together again under Sister

[10] SISTER M. INCARNATION MCDONOUGH'S *account of Chicago fire, in Carondelet Archives.*

Mary Joseph's care in what was henceforth known as St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum.[11]

Of the Sisters residing in the orphanage at the time of the fire, Sisters Mary Louis Lynch, Gertrude Conway, Pancratia Leddy and Laurentia Tracy were the teachers of St, Stephen's School, which had been commenced the preceding September. This was in one of the few parishes that lay outside the path of the great conflagration. A comfortable cottage was now obtained there for the Sisters, and the school, already well filled, was crowded with new comers from other parts of the city. This was the seventh mission of the Congregation in Illinois, two others having been established at Waterloo in 1866 and Brussels in 1869. Five young girls entered the novitiate at Carondelet during the summer of 1867, all pupils of the academy at Waterloo, where the co-operation of zealous pastors kept the school abreast of the times. Its competition with the public schools in the county examinations in recent years resulted in many notable triumphs for its pupils.

In October 1865, Sister Gabriel Corbet opened St. Aloysius' Academy in Hannibal, Missouri; and in September 1866, Sister Francis Joseph Ivory headed the pioneer band of five Sisters that left St. Louis for Kansas City, Missouri. The Reverend Bernard Donnelly, at whose request these were sent, had great hopes for the future of the growing city, to which the Pacific railway companies had recently extended their lines. He wrote with enthusiasm of the prospects of his congregation, which had more than doubled in the short space of six months.[12] Protestants as well as Catholics had urged the erection of a convent school;[13] and a substantial three-story brick building with wide corridors and large, airy rooms went up on a portion of the ten-acre plot secured in 1835 by Father Benedict Roux, first resident pastor of Kansas City.

[11] Site of the present institution known as "The Home of the Friendless."

[12] *Letter of Father Donnelly to Mother Saint John,* Dec. 5, 1865.

[13] *Ibid.*

This tract occupied a wooded bluff overlooking the junction of the Kansas and Missouri rivers and the bottom lands on which were the warehouses and the scattered homes of the dozen or more French and Indian families that made up the settlement then known as Westport Landing. West of the convent were still standing the log church built at that time, and the rectory, also of logs, in which, according to a well authenticated tradition, the first school was taught by Daniel Morgan Boone, son of the picturesque frontiersman of that name.

When the Sisters arrived at their new home on August 28, they "took possession of the walls, as the house was not yet furnished";[14] but a fair given a few weeks after their arrival by the parishioners provided for the most necessary equipment. One hundred and fifty pupils, girls and small boys, were registered in September; and the convent was solemnly blessed by Archbishop Kenrick. Though begun under the patronage of St. Joseph, it was incorporated in 1867 as St. Teresa's Academy. In the seventies, it was widely known as a popular boarding and day academy for girls, the boys having their own separate school. The opening of the West by the railroads brought traders in large numbers through Kansas City, and these found the convent a convenient educational institution for their daughters. Boarders came from points as far distant as Mexico; and Spanish names occur beside French, Irish, German and American in the early lists of pupils. A distinguished guest at St. Teresa's during the first decade of its existence was the great missionary, Father De Smet; and receptions given during the late sixties to John C. Frémont and General James Shields were long remembered events.

For more than a quarter of a century, St. Teresa's was the only Catholic school of higher education for girls in Kansas City. It broadened its curriculum with the growth of the city and the advance of educational ideals, maintaining always the high standard of efficiency set by its early teachers. From its

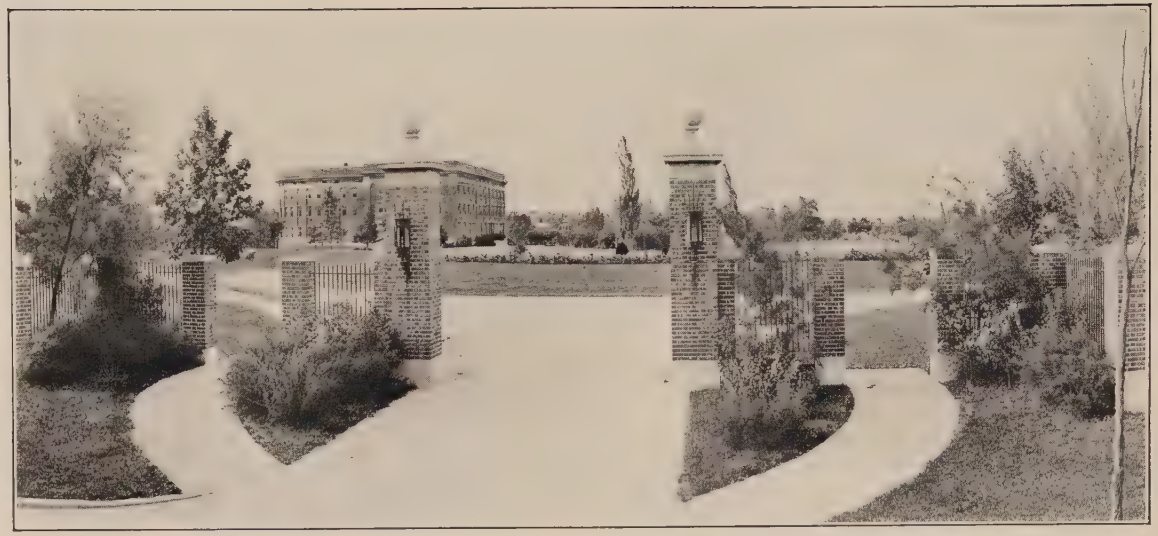
[14] *Sister F. Joseph Ivory's Notes on Kansas City Mission.*

inception, music and art played important parts in its curriculum. The womanly accomplishments common to all the old-time boarding schools, ornamental needlework, lace-making and tapestry, each received its share of attention, and enhanced by their display the exhibit of school work which marked the closing days of each school year.

Under Sister De Pazzi O'Connor, an excellent English scholar, who took charge in 1869, literary composition and expression became leading features, zealously cultivated by succeeding instructors. Among these was Sister Antoinette Slattery, a much loved and highly esteemed young teacher, who, "gifted with singular intelligence and rare graces, knew how to devote these gifts wholly to the greater glory of God and the advantage of her neighbor." [15] Her failing health in the early seventies induced Reverend Mother to transfer her to California after the opening of a mission there at Yuma. Several years of suffering, during which no amount of pain or weakness could prevent her daily attendance at Mass and community exercises, preceded her beautiful death, the news of which reaching Kansas City drew forth touching expressions of sympathy from pupils to whom her devoted life had proved an inspiration. Sisters Bridget Burke, Prudentia Reilly, M. De Britto O'Neill, and Holy Cross Bernelin of the Lyons novitiate, who succumbed to the severity of the American winters and was laid to rest in the garden cemetery of St. Teresa's in 1872, were pioneers of the academy, which extended its activities and its influence as the years passed, and celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in a new abode at Windmoor, the home of the St. Teresa Junior College referred to more fully in a subsequent chapter. The list of its alumnae contains names distinguished in the pioneer history of the city as well as in that of more recent date; and the number is uncounted of its past pupils who heeded literally the Master's precept, following Him into the "valley of silence."

The same is true of many other schools, notably that of the

[15] *Necrology of the Sisters of St. Joseph.* St. Louis, 1883.



THE ST. TERESA JUNIOR COLLEGE AND ACADEMY, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
SOUTH ENTRANCE AND MUSIC AND ART BUILDING

Immaculate Conception in St. Joseph, Missouri, the first distinctively German school undertaken by the Community in the St. Louis Province. This, with St. Mary's Convent in Brookfield, commenced in 1871, and the academy in Chillicothe in 1872, were begun at the request of Bishop Hogan, who welcomed the Sisters to what he designated as "your own diocese of St. Joseph, quite as poor and unknown to the world as he was." [16]

On a bitter cold day in January, the first colony of Sisters reached Chillicothe, to find that through some misunderstanding no provision had been made for their coming. An old hotel known as the Redding House, rented by the parish for a school and vacated the day before their arrival, presented only bare walls and heaps of débris. Fortunately, the day was not far advanced when the Sisters reached the place; and with their own stout hearts and the willing hands of Father Abel, the pastor, and his numerous helpers, they were able before nightfall to refuse the many offers of shelter beneath the hospitable roofs of kindly disposed neighbors, and lighted their own hearth fires.

The trials incident to a first foundation were not borne by the Sisters alone; their burdens were shared by Father Abel and his generous parishioners, among them Peter Markey and his family, also the McNallys, McGuires, and Fitzpatricks, with a spirit that made possible the erection of an academy the following summer, and started it on its long and prosperous career. Efficient teachers perpetuated the work of the first faculty, Sisters M. Herman Lacy, Mary Margaret Spellman, Wilhelmina Deken, and Lucina Crooks. Numerous additions and improvements enlarged the scope of academic work, increasing the facilities for music and art; and the scientific department was equipped by loyal alumnæ.

A courageous band of Sisters from the Mother House braved the perils of western travel in 1870, reaching Tuscon, Arizona, after a long and arduous journey. St. Patrick's Academy in Memphis, Tennessee, begun in 1871, a parochial school in the

[16] *Bishop Hogan to Mother St. John,* Oct. 6, 1870.

same year at Warrington, Florida, and one in St. Louis in 1872, St. Lawrence's, completed the circle of Missouri and southern missions established by Mother Saint John Facemaz. Meanwhile, interesting though trying scenes of missionary life were being enacted in the northern peninsula of Michigan, at Hancock, Sault Ste. Marie and L'Anse, whither Sisters were sent from Carondelet in 1866; and in Marquette, where a boarding and day academy was opened in 1871. These were all in the diocese of Sault Ste. Marie and Marquette, then under the jurisdiction of its first bishop, the illustrious Frederic Baraga.

The northern country was as rich in historical traditions as in the wild and varied beauty of its scenery. Sault Ste. Marie, on St. Mary's River, "three leagues below Lake Superior and twelve above the Lake of the Hurons," [17] lay near the terminus of a gradual cascade, where the waters of the upper lake broke and scattered over the rocky river bed, rendering passage at that point extremely difficult. Quantities of lake trout brought down by the swift current attracted the wandering Huron and Algonquin tribes whom Fathers Raymboult and Isaac Jogues found there in 1641, and for whom they erected on the shore a cross, the sign of redemption. René Menard, after touching at the Sault with a fleet of Ottawa canoes in the fall of 1660, passed the winter at L'Anse Bay on the southern shore of Lake Superior. After much suffering and harsh treatment from hostile natives, he entered the arch-shaped inlet on October 15, and called it St. Teresa's Bay. "I had the consolation of saying Mass there," he wrote to his superiors, "to pay myself with interest for all my past woes. It was here I began a Christian community, which is composed of the Flying Church of the Savage Christians, more nearly adjacent to our French settlements, and one of those whom God's compassion has drawn hither." [18]

No sign of this Christian community remained in 1843, when the missionary, Father Baraga, his heart burning for the regenera-

[17] FATHER DABLON in *Jesuit Relations,* vol. 54, p. 129.
[18] *Jesuit Relations,* vol. 48, p. 265.

tion of pagans, overcame appalling difficulties of travel, and reached L'Anse Bay, to find it surrounded by Chippewa tribes, steeped in intemperance and idolatry. Ten years of his devoted life he gave to reclaim them to God and to civilization, building for them homes, a school house, and a church. These skirted the shore of the bay, facing the wide expanse of water, and were flanked by miles of meadow land and groves of elm, evergreen, and sugar maple trees. Wild berries that grew in profusion on the hillsides and white fish from the bay furnished the chief sustenance of the roving bands, that, under the influence of Father Baraga, settled down into a sober and industrious people and eagerly sought the instruction which he imparted to them daily as priest and schoolmaster.

He had hardly begun his labors at L'Anse, when the rich copper and iron deposits of the Lake Superior region began to attract large numbers from the States and Canada, and white settlers, French, German and Irish, scattered among the Indian missions. Numerous towns sprang into being on the resulting wave of industry; and when Father Baraga was consecrated Bishop and Vicar-Apostolic of Upper Michigan in 1853, his territory extended six hundred miles along the Lake shore,[19] besides including the Indians of the Lower Peninsula.[20] His first episcopal city, Sault Ste. Marie, soon had rivals in Marquette, a rapidly growing town with a handsome church and a convent of Ursulines; and in Hancock, where in 1861 St. Anne's Church was dedicated. From Father Edward Jacker in Hancock and John Baptist Ménet, Jesuit pastor of Sault Ste. Marie, came petitions to Mother Saint John in 1865 and 1866 for teachers. In June, 1866, she dispatched Mother Agatha Guthrie, Assistant-General, and Sister Julia Littenecker to Michigan to complete arrangements for these schools, both of which she had accepted. The Sisters were charmed with the beauty of the North, its

[19] RICHARD H. CLARKE, *A.M., Lives of Deceased Bishops,* p. 496. New York, 1872.

[20] CHRYSOSTOM VERWYST, O.F.M., *Life of Bishop Baraga,* p. 255. Milwaukee. 1900.

healthful climate, clear, cold springs and great forests, then in the first glow of their autumn coloring, making a strong appeal to both.

Still greater was the impression made on them by the Indian mission at L'Anse, where they went in company with Father Jacker, rounding the bay in a light canoe. Here Father Gerard Terhorst, deterred by the poverty of the place from asking for Sisters, had been for a long time praying that the blessing of religious instructors might yet be vouchsafed to his neophytes. To Mother Agatha and her companion Indian education was a subject for enthusiasm; and all looked upon this chance visit of theirs as providential, especially when, on their return to Carondelet, Mother Saint John yielded to their entreaties to send a community to St. Xavier's school at L'Anse. She agreed to this the more readily as, according to Father Terhorst's representation, the Sisters were much desired by the Chippewas, one of whom, speaking for all, after seeing the visitors, had said: "If they have real charity, like our great and good Father, the Bishop, who left all and lived among us for ten years, when we were much more wretched than we are now, they will come and live among us at once." [21]

On August 6, the thirteen Sisters destined for these three missions left Carondelet, accompanied to Chicago by Mother Saint John, who after seeing them on board a lake steamer—its sole passengers—bade them adieu. On the evening of August 12, they reached Sault Ste. Marie, where Sister M. de Chantal Martin and three other Sisters left the steamer for their new mission, amid the regrets of the remaining nine that the delay was not long enough to allow all to accompany the travellers to their residence. This residence was the former "palace" of Bishop Baraga, a plain two-story frame house, vacated by him a few months before when his see was transferred to Marquette. The Sault had been described to Mother Saint John by Father

[21] *Father G. Terhorst to Mother Saint John,* July 18, 1866. *Carondelet Archives.*

Ménet as "dead in winter, but very animated in summer on account of the ships that pass and the strangers who came for health or pleasure." [22] In spite of the transient nature of a great part of the population, forty pupils were soon enrolled in the school that was opened under the patronage of the Sacred Heart.

Meanwhile, the remaining Sisters had landed at Hancock, then a village of a few streets, with scattered houses appearing here and there among the wooded hills. A crowd of small boys, prospective pupils, evidently on the watch for the newcomers, gave them a spontaneous welcome, and with noisy and good-natured rivalry, escorted them to their destination. A wagon drawn by oxen brought up their baggage. Six of the band, with Sister Gonzaga Grand as Superior, remained in Hancock, and after a few days spent with them, Sisters Justine Lemay, Marcelline Reilly and Maxime Croisat, left in an open boat with two native rowers for L'Anse, twenty-five miles distant. Fathers Jacker and Terhorst accompanied them; and as they neared their journey's end, chanting the Ave Maris Stella and the Litany of Loretto, their twelve hours' trip took on the character of a pilgrimage.

It was dark when Nokomis, Indian housekeeper at the mission, letting fall her candle in fright at the first view of the Sisters, showed them to their poor abode, a log cottage, where ticks spread on benches furnished their hard beds, and blocks of wood did duty for chairs. This house Father Terhorst soon took for himself, giving them his own more comfortable one in exchange. Their first day in L'Anse they spent in making a tour of the village—sixty families in all—entering every house and wigwam, allaying the fears of the timid children and making friends with the parents. Forty boys and girls attended school the first year, the government providing a small compensation. In the summer of 1867, the zealous pastor, with the aid of a few Indians, began the erection of a convent, using for material the

[22] *Letter dated* Sept. 26, 1865.

heaps of stones gathered up during the gardening processes of many years. It was completed in October; and, considering the amateur builders, was a remarkable achievement. It consisted of three stories and a basement, with a girls' class room and provision for a small number of girl boarders. On October 28, the first Mass was said in the chapel.

Home made furniture, desks, tables, cupboards, and wardrobes attested the ingenuity of the missionary and his assistants, who also lathed and plastered the building. The cold weather set in before the walls were dry, and every morning they were covered with frost, "very nice to look at, but not so nice to feel, for when it melted, the water ran down in streams." [23] The bitter cold of the northern winter was only one source of the sufferings experienced by the Sisters, but borne cheerfully by them in the consciousness that their labors were every day yielding fruit in the hearts of a simple and grateful people. With patient industry, they cleared and planted their own small garden, teaching the Indians to do the same. These lived mostly by hunting and fishing, making maple sugar in the spring and gathering berries from the hills. In winter, over holes cut in the ice, they watched in relays day and night for fish, transporting it to their homes on dogsleds. The beginning of a new year was always a season of great tribal rejoicing. Pagan Indians came from the surrounding woods, wrapped in blankets, their faces painted, some accompanied by their families, and each bringing his offering for the general good cheer—a canine favorite, slaughtered for the occasion.

Sister Justine took advantage of these gatherings to represent to the parents of young girls the benefits of leaving these with the Sisters. Her first efforts to secure their daughters, often girls of great beauty, met with flat refusals from both fathers and mothers, who evinced much tenderness for their children, and could not be induced to part with them. Gradually, however, boarders came in such numbers that, in 1877, an extension was

[23] *Diary of* SISTER JUSTINE LEMAY. *Carondelet Archives.*

made to the convent for their accommodation. Encouraged by the successful outcome of this feature of the work, Father Terhorst erected a home for orphan boys which was soon filled.

In 1872, Sister Saint Protais came to L'Anse, delighted at the realization of her lifelong wish to contribute ever so little to the conversion of the Indians. She was soon a favorite with old and young, and spent here the remaining years of her life, visiting the sick and infirm, and doing good everywhere to every one. Her humility and simple trust in God are well exemplified by her response to the good-natured teasing of the Sisters who had seen her weary head nodding during the long evening prayers in the chapel: "Well, does not the dog sleep at his Master's feet?" During her long residence in the North, she acquired such skill in the preparation of simple remedies for the sick, that the Indians attributed to her extraordinary healing powers and placed implicit confidence in her ability to cure their maladies.

Her death, the result of a fall, occurred on April 12, 1892, that being Monday in Holy Week. A communication received at the Mission from the Mother House requested that her body be brought to Carondelet for interment; but the Indians raised a storm of protest, claiming that as she had spent twenty years of her life among them, she should not be taken from them in death. Reverend Mother yielded to their wishes, and the precious remains were laid to rest in the Mission graveyard beside those of Sister Ermelina McCauley, who was called to her reward in 1885 at the early age of twenty-two years. As time went on, Sisters Agnes Ryan, and Genevieve Horine, sent in failing health to the bracing climate of Michigan, and Sister Ildephonse Antermeyer, veteran missionary, who in 1905, died at the age of seventy on the scene of her long labors, "found their resting places among a race whom they (the Sisters of Saint Joseph) had benefitted by their sacrifices." [24]

[24] ANTOINE IVAN REZEK, *History of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie and Marquette,* p. 245. Houghton, Michigan, 1906.

Financial difficulties and great business depression between 1871 and 1874 affected the copper country, and caused the withdrawal of the Sisters from the Sault and the temporary closing of the school in Hancock. Though this was reopened in 1877 under the favorable conditions that contributed to its great future success as one of the large schools of the diocese, its failure at the time was much regretted by the venerable Bishop Mrak, successor to Bishop Baraga in the see of Marquette, especially as the Ursulines of his episcopal city were preparing to abandan their academy and return to Canada. Urged by him, Mother Saint John bought the property of the Ursulines, a block of ground and a three story brick convent, and continued the school, sending as its first community Sisters M. de Chantal, Alphonsus Byrne, M. Bernard Walsh, Agnes Gill and Zita Kavanaugh.

The academy, under the patronage of St. Joseph, succeeded beyond all expectation. One of its first graduates was Katherine Rossiter, who after finishing her education entered the novitiate in Carondelet. As Sister Mary Agnes, she returned to Marquette in 1879, at which time Sister De Pazzi O'Connor, was in charge of the school. This, one of two boarding schools in all of Upper Michigan, grew by leaps and bounds into a first class institution patronized by students from the neighboring states, and enjoyed the encouragement of Bishop Mrak and his successors. A home for orphan girls was erected on a portion of the convent grounds and supported by voluntary contribution. Bishop Mrak, after resigning his see, spent many years of his retirement as chaplain of the convent. Numerous instances are on record of his deep piety and simple manners, and of his love for the orphans, for whose benefit he gave generously from his small store, always with the injunction that the giving be kept secret.

For many years, the Sisters from the northern missions made the annual retreat at the old Mission in L'Anse, or as it came

to be called, Baraga,[25] where the sheltering pines and the cool lake breezes made up for the lack of indoor comforts. Frequently the only means of transit to and fro was a small lake steamer which flaunted the interesting legend: "This boat not safe in a storm." If they tempted Providence by embarking in the frail craft which thus frankly exposed its deficiences, no vengeance was ever wreaked on them for their temerity. They always reached their destined port in safety. Blessings rested on their labors; and the first missions of L'Anse, Hancock and Marquette, planted by Mother Saint John Facemaz in the lake district, were increased over five-fold under her successors.

[25] L'Anse was the name originally given to all the country round the bay of that name (Keweenaw Bay) including the site of the mission buildings. The mission church was the only one until 1872, when another was erected on the east side of the bay, nine miles from the mission, at the present city of L'Anse. A settlement begun near the mission in 1883 was called Baraga, and by this name also the mission was then designated until the erection of a post office there in the nineties, when it was given its present name of Assinins. REZEK, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 393; vol. II, pp. 234, 244, 247.

When Baraga was built, the Indians wished it called *Justine*, but yielded their choice of a name to one that they loved better than any other.

CHAPTER XI

THE ADMINISTRATION OF REVEREND MOTHER AGATHA GUTHRIE. (1872–1904)

In the election of a successor to Reverend Mother Saint John Facemaz on May 3, 1872, the choice of the Sisters fell on her assistant, Mother Agatha Guthrie. For thirty-two years, until her death in 1904, through successive elections, often against her own protest, she was retained in office as Superior-General of the Congregation. At the close of her long life, she was ranked as one of the most extraordinary women of the Church in America.[1]

In birth, training and character, Reverend Mother Agatha was an American. She was born in Bradford County, Pennsylvania, August 31, 1829, the only daughter of non-Catholic parents, Charles Guthrie and Harriet Grace, both of whose ancestors had emigrated from England to America in pre-Revolutionary times. Her maternal grandfather, Joseph Grace, and his brother Emanuel, stalwart men over six feet in height, joined a company of American militia in Boston, and fought their first battle at Bunker Hill. After the war, Joseph with his wife, Hannah Salisbury, left the old homestead in Massachusetts to settle in Bradford County, Pennsylvania. To this place, the Guthries also had removed from their original location in the Chenango Valley in eastern New York.

Charles Guthrie, at the time of his marriage to beautiful Harriet Grace, was engaged in farming at Springfield, Pennsylvania. He was a man of refined tastes, particularly fond of music, which he cultivated as a pastime. A member of no church, he believed in God and in the immortality of the soul; and, honest and God-fearing, a lover of his fellow-men, he

[1] *Church Progress,* St. Louis, Feb. 20, 1904.

regulated his life in strict accordance with his lights. His wife, several years after her marriage, became a Methodist, and remained a devout member of that persuasion until her eightieth year.

Their little daughter, whom they called Minerva, was sent to school at the early age of four years. A long remembered experience of hers was playing truant during those very youthful school days, when the attraction of the green hillside near her home was stronger than that of chart or desk. Her only brother, Martin Van Buren, died in infancy; and when she was twelve years old, she lost her father, to whom she was tenderly devoted and whom she resembled much in character and disposition. The family had, in the meantime, removed to Illinois; and in the public schools of Ottawa and Peru, Minerva finished her education. With her mother's great beauty, she had inherited her father's love for music; and attracted largely by her enjoyment of a well sung Methodist hymn, she adopted the religion of her mother. "Oh, if I could always hear such singing," she once exclaimed to the latter in a burst of enthusiasm, "I would feel as happy as if I were going to Heaven." [2]

At eighteeen, she was a teacher in a select school in St. Louis. Here she formed a close friendship with a young Irish Catholic girl, a companion teacher, whom she frequently accompanied to church, and from whom she eagerly sought information regarding the Catholic faith. On the invitation of her friend, she attended some lectures given at St. Francis Xavier's Church by its pastor, Reverend Arnold Damen of the Society of Jesus.[3] The forceful words of this celebrated preacher and missionary

[2] The foregoing facts of Mother Agatha's family and early life were given by her mother to the Sister historian at Carondelet in 1890.

[3] Father Damen, a native of Holland, accompanied Father De Smet on a return trip to America in 1837, and entered the Jesuit Novitiate at Florissant, Missouri. He was pastor of the Jesuit Church in St. Louis from 1847 to 1857, and then introduced his Order into Chicago, organizing Holy Family Parish there. He made numerous converts during the course of his long life. His death occurred at Omaha, January 1, 1890. *Ill. Cath. Hist. Review,* vol. I, p. 436.

brought conviction to the young girl searching for truth. She lost no time in presenting herself for instructions to Father Damen, who was much impressed by the sincerity of his neophyte, and her intelligent grasp of the doctrinal problems explained to her. She was baptized by him, taking the name of Philomena and discarding completely the classic appellation given her by her parents. The doctrine of the real presence of our Lord in the Eucharist appealed strongly to her, and love for the Blessed Sacrament became the absorbing devotion of her life. Mrs. Guthrie objected strongly to her daughter's change of creed;[4] but the latter remained firm in the practice of her religion, and three years after her baptism, sought entrance into the novitiate at Carondelet.

It was in the early summer of 1850 that Mother Celestine received the tall, graceful girl, who, like the strong-souled St. Teresa presenting herself at the Spanish Carmel clad in brilliant yellow, appeared wearing a modish gown of pink, the color setting off to advantage her fair complexion and wealth of golden hair. As she had come provided with nothing more neutral in shade, she was permitted for a while to retain her pink; but, with her soul intent on invisible things, she was quite unembarrassed at the contrast between herself and her dark-robed companions. On the feast of St. Teresa, 1850, she received the habit in company with Justine Thöne, a native of Germany, who was given the name of Sister Mary Frances; and two years later, on the same feast, both made their vows. Archbishop Kenrick officiated at the ceremony, assisted by Reverend John O'Hanlon.

Mother Agatha, early in her religious life, won the love and confidence of Sisters and superiors, and rose rapidly into prominence in the community, taking in the hearts of all the esteemed place which she never lost, but held for over fifty years. She was among the original band of Sisters sent to Wheeling in 1853,

[4] Mrs. Guthrie persevered in her profession of Methodism until her eightieth year, when she was baptized a Catholic in the Carondelet Chapel.

MOTHER AGATHA GUTHRIE
1829–1904

and for a short time was stationed at the Orphan Asylum in St. Louis. Here it was that she imbibed the love for the orphans that made her a friend of the homeless throughout her life. In 1861, she was appointed Provincial Superior in Troy; and for six years previous to her election in 1872 as Superior-General, she had served at the Mother House in the capacity of Assistant-General.

She justified the Sisters' almost unanimous choice of her for the highest office in the Congregation by the many noble qualities of mind and heart which she displayed in the exercise of her various functions. With great strength of character, and a remarkable power of commanding, she mingled rare sweetness and a gentleness that seemed almost timidity. Her countenance beamed with kindness; and she bore herself with a calm dignity of manner that was never disturbed, even in perplexing circumstances. To those who marvelled at her habitual cheerfulness under the burdens which they knew that she bore, she often made reply, "It comes with the grace of office," and she acknowledged that she never allowed worry a place in her mind, but submitted all to Providence. Of herself, of the circumstances surrounding her conversion or the influences that led her to embrace, first the Faith and then the religious life, she seldom spoke, even to those most intimately associated with her.

It was hard for many to realize that she had ever been outside the fold. On one rare occasion, she surprised a Sister companion, who, when both were walking near a non-Catholic cemetery, made the Sign of the Cross, remarking that she always did so when passing a Protestant graveyard. Reverend Mother was much amused; but replied seriously and with just a touch of sadness that came to her in thoughtful moods: "On the judgment day, it is from such a place that all of mine shall rise." "I think there is always something queer about converts, don't you?" asked a Sister of her one day, not knowing that she was addressing one. "Yes, I do," was the emphatic answer made by Reverend Mother; and thereafter, she was accustomed to

explain what she called her own eccentricities by attributing them to the "Protestant in me." She cherished a special fondness for the College Church, as the old Jesuit church on Ninth Street was called; and loved to slip away sometimes with a companion to spend an hour in a quiet corner of the sacred edifice in which she had first heard from Father Damen the words of Life and received the light of Faith.

Always shunning public notice both for herself and her community, she loved and cultivated the hidden life; and whenever the stress of duty permitted, and she could do so unperceived, she spent hours before the Blessed Sacrament. Nothing was more distasteful to her than praise, and being photographed was an ordeal to which she seldom willingly submitted. It was only in her later years that she yielded to the entreaties of the Sisters for a portrait; but it distressed her to see this frequently reproduced. Entering the studio one day when no one was present, she found on an easel a large picture of herself, well on the way to completion. Filling a brush with paint, she began to daub out the eyes, and had partially succeeded, when, with a dismayed cry, the artist appeared in the doorway. Quietly continuing her work of effacement, Reverend Mother said in the half-whispered tones habitual to her: "I think that my little Sister could be much better employed."

Her great heart seemed to embrace not only all who suffered, but all who sinned; and stories of weakness or wrong doing that reached her from whatever source drew forth no sterner judgment on the culprit than the sympathetic exclamation, "Poor human nature!" The words of St. Francis of Assissi, "What we are in God's sight, that we are and no more," she repeated so frequently as to make the expression a characteristic one. For the poverty-stricken, she had a special solicitude, and linked them with her devotion to the Apostles, keeping always on her private list of charity at least twelve poor persons. None enjoyed more than she did the community recreations; and no incident of the day, as related by the Sisters, was too trivial to

excite her interest or amusement. A good listener, and always sparing of her words, she rarely led in conversation, but stimulated it by her clever sallies and a most enjoyable wit.

Her government of the Congregation was firm and kind. Her frequent re-elections proved the personal devotion of the Sisters, who appreciated her great and lovable qualities, and their confidence in the wisdom of her administration. They brought into prominence her own humility, "the touchstone of religious perfection which few women in her position had ever mastered so well"; [5] for she accepted office only with reluctance, and would gladly have laid down the burden of authority to enjoy the coveted retirement which her necessarily active life precluded. Much of her success in the management of the affairs of the Congregation was due to the aid given her by her councillors and other able officers in whose selection she gave evidence of her fine powers of discernment. The early hardships of the Sisters in America, their long struggle with poverty and with discouraging and adverse circumstances, had been the fiery test of vocations, and had produced women of heroic character, unselfish and self-sacrificing, with great powers of endurance in trials of all kinds, and with a clear vision of the spiritual values of life. There were scores of such, many of them young in years, but old in experience, having been called early to positions of responsibility or of peculiar difficulty in the growing Congregation.

Reverend Mother Agatha's first Council, elected with her in 1872, consisted of Mother Saint John Facemaz, Mother Julia Littenecker as Assistant-General, Sister Theodora McCormack and Sister Mary Pius Sexton. The last named, though only in her twenty-ninth year, had been for several years in charge of St. Joseph's Hospital in St. Paul, a position which called for fortitude and a fearlessness of danger in infected wards; but which furnished to her ardent nature an opportunity of bringing many a hardened sinner to a death bed repentance, and numerous

[5] *Church Progress,* St. Louis, Feb. 20, 1904.

non-Catholics to an acceptance of the truth. Her own death occurred at the Mother House after a very brief illness April 27, 1875, on the eve of a General Chapter for which all the delegates had assembled. A month previous, during the course of a retreat which Sister Mary Pius made with unusual fervor, she remarked to the Sisters with almost prophetic insight, "This may be my last retreat." Such it proved, though at the time death seemed very far away. The deliberations of the Chapter were postponed, while the Sisters gathered in an impressive scene around the couch of their dying companion.

She was replaced by Sister Liguori Monaghan; and in 1878, Sister Adele Hennessey was appointed to succeed Sister Theodora McCormack, a cultured woman of Irish birth and training, who was made Superior in Albany. To Sister Adele Hennessey, who had been successively Superior of St. Patrick's in St. Louis and in Mobile, Alabama, fell the direction of the schools, which she supervised for twenty-seven years, her affability and gracious manner winning for her a way to all hearts; while everywhere in the class room was felt the benefit of her systematic and practical methods of organization. No other changes were made in the General Council until 1896; and the character of permanency which that important body developed, coupled with the exalted personal qualities of its members, lent weight to its decisions and commanded confidence.

Few members of the Congregation have been held in more universal esteem than Mother Julia Littenecker. As local Superior, mistress of novices or councillor, her influence was constantly exerted in promoting pious organizations and societies, in the spread of good reading, and in exemplifying a great ideal. "An hour with Mother Julia meant courage for the faltering, strength for the weak, impulse to the ardent and zealous, and to all a closer approach to God, in whose presence she always moved with the gentle strength that accomplished wonders in her work for souls." [6] A good Latin and English scholar, she

[6] *Western Watchman*, St. Louis, May 25, 1913.

was also conversant with German, French, Italian, and Spanish, and was an authority on Church music and hagiology. In 1867, she accompanied the Superior-General to Rome. From its shrines as well as from other noted ones in Italy and France—Loreto, Genezzano, Lourdes, La Salette and Lyons—she gathered stores of information and sacred lore, which it was her delight to impart to the Sisters for their edification and instruction.

She interested herself in foreign missions with a truly apostolic spirit. Among her correspondents were members of religious orders in Europe and America, and missionaries in China and Palestine, who kept her informed of their work and relied much on her assistance in both material and spiritual ways. When, in 1886, a call from the United States Government on behalf of the California Indians opened up to the Congregation a new field for its activities, it was to Mother Julia that the difficult task of inaugurating Catholic instruction among them was confided. For three months she remained at the Yuma Reservation, guiding and directing the teachers and winning the hearts of the simple natives, whose conversion to the Faith became the object of her zeal and her prayers until it was happily accomplished.

For many years, she added to her other duties those of custodian of the relics with which the chapel at the Mother House was enriched during the Pontificate of Pius IX. In connection with this occupation, she made the history of the martyrs an absorbing study, and became a most devout client of those heroic souls. She established in the Congregation the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, and took a deep interest in the beatification of the apostle of this devotion, Father Claude de la Colombière, offering and procuring from others many prayers and novenas that he might be publicly honored by the Church. In order to spread devotion to St. Joseph, she compiled from indulgenced prayers a popular book of devotion in his honor,[7] which, first

[7] *The Crown of St. Joseph,* D. J. Sadlier and Co. New York and Montreal, 1875.

published in 1875, went through a third edition in 1880. As a frontispiece to this book, appeared for the first time an engraving of the Saint under the title *Pater Amabilis,* copied from a painting made in the Gagliardi Studio in Rome for the convent in Carondelet. This was a companion piece to *Mater Amabilis,*[8] also executed by Gagliardi to commemorate the feast of our Blessed Mother erected by Pius IX, February 26, 1874, for the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet, and celebrated in their convents on the second Sunday after Easter. Mother Julia was specially interested in obtaining this favor. For over sixty years, fifty of which were spent almost continuously at the Mother House, she devoted her time, talents and energy to preserving the spirit and traditions of the Congregation, of which she was one of the strongest supports.

Intimately associated with her and with Reverend Mother Agatha from 1875, was Sister Liguori Monaghan, who, for thirty-eight years, in the capacity of treasurer, managed all the important financial affairs of the Congregation. She was a native of Savannah, Georgia, and entered the novitiate in Carondelet in 1861. Her intense devotion to duty and her wonderful spirit of sacrifice never dampened the ardor of her love for the Southland, which she left during a troubled period. With shrewd business instinct and a capacity for handling complex transactions, she united a delicate sense of humor and a sweetness of disposition and manner that won love and confidence from young and old. She had a strong faith in Providence; and the difficulties and distracting cares of her position never altered her habitual calm. She seemed literally to have cast all her care upon the Lord, while labouring unceasingly as the faithful steward of His goods.

In the early days of her treasurership, and often afterwards when funds were low, Sister Liguori contrived with great in-

[8] On May 15, 1874, our Holy Father granted an indulgence of three hundred days for the recitation of the *Sub tuum* before this picture, which was specially blessed by him. *Documents in Carondelet Archives.*

genuity to lessen expenditures and increase her capital. One means which afforded her great pleasure as well as profit was making the numerous wax candles needed for the chapel. She watched and tended with enthusiasm each process, from the spreading of the brown flakes that lay bleaching in the sun, until the finished product gleamed tall and creamy white on the marble altars, often their only decoration. For years, she was afflicted with deafness, which debarred her from many of the pleasures of social intercourse; but the recreation hour found her always in her accustomed place among the Sisters, contributing in her quiet way to the enjoyment of all.

She was loyally devoted to Reverend Mother Agatha, whom she survived nine years, and whose death left in her heart a void which no other friendship could fill. Her own death in 1913 was the fitting crown of a life crowded with duties nobly done. On the evening preceding it, Sister Liguori, seemingly in the best of health, had remarked to Reverend Mother, referring to a financial statement, "I have finished my account. It is ready for the morning." She failed to appear in the chapel for prayers the following morning, an occurrence so unusual as to excite alarm. A Sister was sent immediately to her room, but finding the door locked, effected an entrance through a window opening on a balcony of the inner court. Sister Liguori lay as if in a peaceful sleep; but a second glance sufficed to show that the sleep was one which wakes only in the light of an eternal day. On her desk was the folded report of her earthly stewardship, accurately and beautifully prepared, and balanced to date.

Under the influence of such great souls, life flowed smoothly at Carondelet, where each day brought its round of duties, each summer its spiritual retreats and teachers' institutes with almost monotonous regularity. The Congregation was steadily increasing in numbers, the statistics of 1875 showing a total of four hundred and fifty-three members. These were located in ten dioceses, and had under their care thirteen thousand two hundred and twenty children. Many of the children were in

parochial schools, then becoming very numerous in the western dioceses. Reverend Mother Agatha was a strong advocate of the parochial schools, and especially those of grammar and elementary grades, which she considered more far-reaching in their effects than either the academy or high school. Among those offered for her acceptance, she frequently chose the least promising from a material point of view, and was often heard to remark that the poor, small missions, where there was apparently little earthly recompense, were more fruitful in blessings for the Congregation than the larger and more prosperous ones. During her first six years of office, she supplied Sisters for twelve parish schools in the St. Louis Province alone.

Two of the most prosperous of these were St. John's and St. Patrick's in St. Louis. Both were in large and flourishing parishes. Of the former, Reverend Patrick J. Ryan, future Bishop of St. Louis and Archbishop of Philadelphia, and Reverend John Joseph Hennessey, later Bishop of Wichita, were successively pastors. The former, after his elevation to the coadjutorship of St. Louis, remained twelve years at St. John's, the pro-Cathedral; and during that time, his interest in the school was unflagging. In the midst of numerous duties, he found time for frequent visits to the children, among whom he loved to single out the "flowers of the flock," this being the name by which he designated those whose auburn locks were the same hue as his own. With the lively coöperation of its pastors, St. John's rose to first rank among the parish schools, and was largely attended, as was also St. Patrick's, in which many men and women prominent in business and social life received their early training.

St. Patrick's, the first Irish-American parish in St. Louis, was organized in 1843, but it grew slowly. Its magnificent school was not completed until 1873. It was built by Reverend Father Fox at an outlay of one hundred thousand dollars, a considerable fortune at that time in St. Louis. In January, 1873, just before the date set for the opening of school, Father Fox fell a victim

to pneumonia, dying after a brief illness. In February, the classes were organized under the direction of his successor, Reverend Father Archer. The Christian Brothers took the larger boys, and Sisters Dominic Fink, Aloysius Andres and Elizabeth Parrott, the girls. The number of Sisters was increased the following month by Sisters Cassilda Mernaugh and Theolinda Kelly. For more than a quarter of a century, these schools prospered, with ever increasing numbers of teachers and pupils, until their character was materially changed by the encroachment on parish boundaries of the business and commercial interests of the city, which drove out old residents and introduced a large foreign element. St. Patrick's presents at present the anomaly of registering only Italian pupils, and the parish furnishes a rich field for settlement work.

Other St. Louis schools provided with teachers by Reverend Mother Agatha at this time were St. Nicholas' in 1873, St. Francis Xavier's in 1875, and St. Michael's in 1876. To Mobile, Alabama, were sent in the fall of 1873 five Sisters, with Sister Felicity Mulligan as Superior, to open St. Patrick's Convent, which was dedicated on October 18 with imposing ceremonies and an eloquent sermon by Very Reverend Canon Moynihan of New Orleans. In the same year, another band of intrepid missionaries set out by a difficult overland route in company with Right Reverend J. B. Salpointe for Arizona; and at Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, in 1874, a free elementary school for boys and girls was made possible by the munificence of Felix Vallé, who furnished an endowment for that purpose. The academy established there in 1858 was in a flourishing condition, a large brick structure put up in 1867 having replaced the earlier frame building. In 1894, another three story brick school was erected by the parish on a section of the convent property leased for that purpose; and the elementary and high school departments removed to it in April of that year steadily increased in numbers until they registered four hundred students. St. Bridget's School in Chicago was begun in 1873, and the Nativity, now

averaging over eleven hundred pupils, in 1875. In the same year, the first hospital in the St. Louis Province, St. Joseph's in Kansas City, was built and equipped; and Florissant, Missouri, and Peru, Illinois, each received a community of school Sisters from Carondelet. In 1877, parochial schools were opened in Central City, Colorado; Sedalia, Missouri; and Indianapolis, Indiana.

The inauguration of this last in the fall of 1877 occurred soon after the return of Reverend Mother Agatha from Rome, whither she had gone in company with Mother Saint John, as mentioned in a preceding chapter, in order to secure the final approbation of the Constitutions. Reverend Mother was much impressed by her audience with Pius IX and the signal kindness manifested by him. The Eternal City was to her a world of attractions. "There are a thousand objects of interest for me in Rome," she wrote from there; "even the mouldering ruins of ancient pagan times have wonderful tales to tell." [9] Her visits to the Colosseum and the Catacombs increased her great veneration for the martyrs, whose blood had darkened the arena, and whose memory still haunted the places sanctified by their sufferings and their holy deaths.

It was during her stay in Rome that she endeavored to obtain relics for the convent in Carondelet. This was not an easy thing to do; but she enlisted the help of Reverend Pietro Marchionni, Apostolic Missionary and Canon of the Church of St. Agnes in Rome, who interested himself in her behalf. He was a devout client of St. Joseph, a friend of the Congregation, and also of the ancient family of Savorelli in Forli, Italy, in whose possession was a rich treasury of relics taken from the Catacombs in the first years of the nineteenth century by order of Pius VII, and given to Count Nicholas Savorelli. Of this family also was Mercurialis Prati, Bishop of Forli, Domestic Prelate to Pius VII and Assistant at the Papal Throne. A great portion of the relics passed eventually to Count Nicholas

[9] *Letter of Rev. Mother Agatha,* Rome, Apr. 20, 1877.

Savorelli Prati, from whom Father Marchionni obtained, after much pleading, those which now belong to the Congregation.

Nine entire bodies, those of Saints Nerusia Euticia, Vincent, Aurelius, Theodora, Irenaeus, Liberatus, and three child-martyrs, Discolius, Berisimus and Berenice, each with its *Vas Sanguinis*, and rudely carved slabs from the Catacombs, were included in what Father Marchionni termed the "little Paradise," transmitted by him across the water early in 1878, as "missionaries of the ancient Faith, to preach to us of the virtues of the Crucified, exemplified by the death which they suffered for his sake." [10] The most interesting of these is Nerusia Euticia, taken from the cemetery of Saint Calipodius July 16, 1801. It is clad in the ancient Roman costume of a lady of high rank, a tunic of cloth of silver worn over a robe of gold brocade and confined by a silver girdle. The feet are encased in jeweled sandals, and a jeweled crown adorns the head. In the center of a frame filled with small relics is also a picture in oil by Michel Angelo de Caravaggio, "The Descent from the Cross," a prized possession of the Savorellis for more than a century and a half.[11] The relics, with the exception of those intended for the provinces, were placed in the chapel at Carondelet on November 17, 1880, by Right Reverend Patrick J. Ryan, Coadjutor of St. Louis, accompanied by a large concourse of the clergy. Great pomp and solemnity attended the ceremony, giving it the character of a sacred pageant of medieval times, and making the day a memorable one in the history of the Mother House. On gorgeous crimson catafalques rich with gold embroideries, the

[10] SISTER JULIA LITTENECKER, *Sketch of Our Saints and Martyrs* (MS.) p. 9. *Carondelet Archives.*

[11] "I the undersigned, declare that in a family inventory of the year 1721 existing in the archives of my family, the painting representing the descent from the Cross which is enclosed in a frame of relics was declared to be the work of Michel Angelo de Caravaggio, and as such has always been recognized not only in successive inventories, but by connoisseurs in art. Nicholas Savorelli Prati, Forli, Mar. 20, 1884." Copy of Document in French and Italian given to Rev. Mother Agatha under the seal of the Savorelli family.

sainted remains were borne in long procession, with lighted tapers and amid the chanting of litanies, to their chapel shrine.[12]

To each of the Provincial Houses, Reverend Mother sent relics from her precious store, those of Saint Irenaeus to St. Paul, Saint Theodora to Troy, and Saint Liberatus to Tuscon. The body of the little Saint Discolius she reserved for Nazareth Retreat. This, in the country five miles from Carondelet, was for eight years, from 1872 to 1880, the place of the novitiate. In the center of a sixty-acre farm and surrounded by fine trees, a plain but roomy brick convent was erected, to which the novices with their teachers and mistress, Mother Saint John, removed in the summer of 1872. The first Mass was celebrated there June 21 by Reverend J. M. I. St. Cyr, for ten years chaplain at Carondelet, and now sent by Archbishop Kenrick in a similar capacity to Nazareth. Father St. Cyr remained at Nazareth until his death in 1883, the spiritual guide of the novices, to whom he gave daily instructions full of wisdom and unction. He was an omnivorous reader, and until the loss of his sight in 1876, spent hours with his books, giving considerable time also to out door pursuits. He took great pride and pleasure in beautifying the grounds, planted the trees in the little cemetery when it was portioned off in 1874, and set out the vineyard which he tended carefully.

[12] A feast in honor of the Martyrs, to be celebrated each year on November 17 at the Mother House, was granted by special indult of Leo XIII, March 12, 1881. By another indult of November 28, 1899, this was transferred to June 21, anniversary of the translation of the relics to the new chapel, dedicated that year. *Documents in Carondelet Archives.* When in 1882, doubts were raised regarding the authenticity of some relics transported from Italy to other parts of Christendom, copies of the documents in the Carondelet archives, signed and sealed by Rt. Rev. P. J. Ryan, were transmitted by him to Rome, where they were verified by comparison with duplicates kept in the Archives of the Sacred Congregation of Relics. They were returned in May, 1883, with a Brief of Leo XIII, granting, on account of the Holy Martyrs, six plenary indulgences to be gained, with the usual conditions, by the Sisters of St. Joseph on six different days each year; viz, January 29, May 16, September 19, October 4, October 15, and November 17.

NAZARETH RETREAT

CEMETERY AT NAZARETH RETREAT
(Monument of Father St. Cyr in left foreground.)

It was while working among his vines on July 17, 1876, that he became suddenly blind, and was led to his small study near the chapel, where many quiet hours of his had passed. Care and medical skill alike failed to restore the lost vision; but the seven years of life that remained to him were useful and happy ones. The Franciscan Fathers, appointed chaplains at the Mother House in 1875, came as assistant chaplains to Nazareth, and celebrated Mass and Benediction; but Father St. Cyr continued his instructions to the novices, infusing into his words day by day a deeper spirituality, and impressing on the minds of his young hearers the importance of that higher knowledge which alone gives value to the things of life. Each day a Sister read to him from his favorite books and magazines, or wrote at his dictation. "Our spiritual reading first," was the injunction with which the literary portion of his day began; and his hand sought the selected volume, always in its accustomed place within his reach. He had many visitors, old friends to spend a social hour; and others interested in historical knowledge, to whom he loved to relate his reminiscences of early days.

His genial humor, the source of many a pleasant episode enjoyed by young and old, never deserted him; and his natural cheerfulness and patience, his resignation to all the dispositions of Providence, lightened his affliction. The virtues which he was now called upon to practice he had recommended to the Sisters many years before in a New Year's letter, which also illustrates the simplicity of the noted missionary:

I wish you, beloved Sisters, besides many happy years, a true love of all the virtues of your holy state, Christian patience and resignation to God's will in trials and adversities, the persevering courage necessary to fulfill the office which Mary and Joseph so cheerfully and lovingly fulfilled during our Lord's infancy. Our Lord is, as it were, in a state of infancy in our midst. We must take care of him, wait on him, accompany him. Such is the rich legacy which Mary and Joseph have left you as their daughters and successors

in office. This honorable office, cordially and faithfully accomplished, will be the channel through which the choicest blessings that can make a whole year happy will come to you.[13]

His death occurred after a month's illness, February 21, 1883, shortly before the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination. This was what he had wished, to die before the exercises of a golden jubilee celebration could bring him undesired notice. "I want to go to Heaven," were his last words, addressed to Sister Febronia Boyer, who, seeing him very restless, asked if there was anything he desired. He had made continual inquiries during his illness about the weather, expressing the fear that the inclement season would prove injurious to the Sisters if they followed his remains to the graveyard. The spring thaw set in early, and the roads leading to Nazareth were almost impassable, yet his funeral was largely attended. Very Reverend Henry Muehlsiepen, Vicar-General of St. Louis, celebrated the solemn Mass of Requiem, assisted by Reverend Charles Ziegler as deacon, Reverend M. O'Reilly as subdeacon, and Reverend Innocent Wapelhorst, Franciscan, Master of Ceremonies. Right Reverend Patrick J. Ryan delivered the funeral sermon, an eloquent eulogy on the virtues of the deceased priest, his peaceful and harmonious life, his conformity to the will of God, and his desire to be hidden in Him who was his light in darkness when the light of earth went out. Six priests bore the coffin to the cemetery, while the accompanying clergy [14] chanted the *Miserere;* and at the foot of the great stone crucifix, under the larch trees which he had planted, Father St. Cyr was laid to rest.

The early years at Nazareth were by no means years of opulence. Spiritual riches there were in abundance, but material conveniences were few. A farm or garden cared for with the least possible outlay was then a necessity; and the hours out

[13] *Letter of Father St. Cyr,* Jan. 1, 1864.

[14] Among those present were Very Rev. Chancellor Vandersanden, Fathers Head, Donohue, Poepe, Goller, Jerome, O.F.M., Bonacum, P. F. O'Reilly and Daly. The last named, by his own request, is also buried at Nazareth.

of class were often spent by the novices with watering can or pruning knife contributing their share to the upkeep of the small estate; or gathering from the corn fields the fresh clean shucks that made their beds. One of their number was delegated to teach the children of the neighboring farmers, assembling them daily in a small house on the convent grounds. The recreation hours the novices loved to spend with Sister Felicité Bouté, who passed the last years of her beautiful life at Nazareth. In the pioneer days at Carondelet, Sister Felicité was infirmarian; and the academy girls remembered long the love and kindness with which she was accustomed to soothe away their ailments or dry the tears which fell when their lonesome hearts were yearning for home. "No one was ever rude in the presence of that tall, sweet Sister," wrote one of her girls in 1840; "We seldom heard her laugh, but her smile was contagious." [15] She always retained her spirit of cheerful gayety. In fact, it was her laughter that became contagious at Nazareth; and so loud were the sounds of merriment issuing at times from the recreation room, that Mother Saint John would slip gently in to ascertain the cause of the turmoil.

For twenty-five years, Sister Felicité had been stationed in St. Louis, where, as Superior of St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum, she was a tender mother to the numerous children who came under her care. The Sisters and others to whom her good works were known loved to reckon her among the uncanonized saints; and the former, after her death, September 23, 1881, made frequent pilgrimages to her grave. Up the hill to the little cemetery, Sister Ephrem Bérard, bent for years under a grievous malady, toiled painfully for nine days, to kneel at Sister Felicité's grave begging for health through the intercession of the friend whom she had loved in life; and on the ninth, walked home straight and lithe, to resume her former duties, strengthened in body, and happy in the consciousness that God was so very near.

A series of rainy seasons and the poor drainage of the country

[15] ELIZA MCKENNY BROUILLET, *Memoirs*, p. 46.

about Nazareth, where swampy depressions, attributed to the earthquake of 1812, persisted in remaining, bred fevers; and in 1880, Reverend Mother Agatha brought the novices back to Carondelet, where she erected a new wing to the building in 1883.

The academy there had grown rapidly, and attained great prominence and popularity under the direction of Sister William McDonald, who for thirteen years, from 1873 to 1886, devoted her versatile talents towards maintaining a high standard for the institution. For several years Sister William had been a pupil of the academy, leaving her Alma Mater to enter the novitiate in 1861 at the age of sixteen. On the completion of her novitiate in 1863, she was with the first band of Sisters sent to Peoria, Illinois. Young as she was in years, she gave evidence at once of ability in the class room, besides being an excellent musician; and she eagerly seized every opportunity of rendering herself more capable. As a teacher and directress, she was rigid in maintaining discipline; but possessed in a more than ordinary degree the gift of discerning and developing the best traits of her pupils, instilling into them a love for study and a desire to attain the best in intellectual and artistic pursuits.

While a well planned curriculum was followed, much attention was given to the study of literature by Sister William and by her immediate successors, Sister Teresa Louise and Sister Sacred Heart Hall, both gifted with literary ability; and a printing press, set up and operated in the convent, turned out monthly copies of *St. Joseph's Journal,* edited by the pupils, who were interesting contributors to its pages. Under the tutelage of Matthew Hastings, a well known St. Louis artist, and the fostering care of Reverend Mother Agatha, an art critic of unerring taste and judgment, was developed among teachers and pupils the skill in art which became a heritage in the Congregation, and filled the studios with choice productions of pencil and brush. A gifted teacher trained during this period, but snatched away all too early from the scene of her labors, was Sister Baptista Barry,

sister of Reverend Michael Barry, for nearly fifty years a distinguished churchman in the Diocese of Syracuse, New York. Sister Baptista was Reverend Mother's private secretary at the time of her death, which occurred on Christmas morning 1877, and was universally lamented.

A welcome visitor and art lecturer at Saint Joseph's in the eighties was Eliza Allen Starr, whose love for celebrated shrines led her to the Martyrs' Chapel in Carondelet. She summed up her first impressions of the convent as follows:

When our train for Carondelet left us at the station, the mysterious charm which belongs to a strange road in the night time came upon us. The electric lights with their obtrusive glare had been left behind, and by the yellow flame of gas jets we ascended a stony road, as we thought between high banks until we came to what looked as if it had come from some land beyond the sea—an ideal convent! A few steps brought us to the upper terrace, and even in the late evening, we could see the slender willow branches in full leaf waving in the night wind. It was delightfully mysterious to know that there was a landscape beyond, and even the great Father of Waters, yet to see nothing. Sister guided us to the steps, a door opened, a familiar habit, even if not a familiar face, greeted us; and still another, no less than the benignant face of Reverend Mother herself, and we were at St. Joseph's. When the convent guest room received us, and the peace of a religious house fell upon soul and sense, "Unlike all places in the world," we said, "wherever this religious house may be." The morning showed us the hollow square on which the medieval convent is built, and in the middle of the square on a high column our own St. Joseph! On three sides ran the open galleries, and on the fourth, a closed loggia with its windows. St. Joseph's back was towards us, but this was because he was looking, as he should, towards the chapel and the lord of the chapel.[16]

Her interest in the chapel centered in the relics, reminiscent of the catacombs and shrines of Rome; and the vesper service evoked her enthusiasm. "Cecilian music at Vespers! Cecilian

[16] ELIZA ALLEN STARR in *St. Joseph's Journal*, 1888, vol. III, p. 2.

music never goes alone into any chapel. With it go meditation, and the relish for heavenly things." [17]

When the fiftieth anniversary of the American foundation was celebrated in 1886, the relish for heavenly things had attracted to the Congregation a total of eight hundred and sixty-two professed members, and one hundred and three novices. The commemorative exercises at the Mother House in the week of March 25 were mainly religious, a solemn triduum, Masses and Benedictions. A musical and literary programme, allegorical in character, given by the students, portrayed the chief events of the five decades. Congratulations and good wishes received from friends throughout the country gave evidence of the abundant harvest produced in fifty years by the pioneers of 1836. With the exception of Sister Febronie Chapellon, who was still living in France, Sister Saint Protais was the only one left of that courageous band. She was then in her seventy-third year, and in response to Reverend Mother's summons, came from Baraga, Michigan, to participate in the celebration. The central figure of the joyous occasion, she took a child's delight in the festivities that recalled scenes and events of which she had been so great a part.

A pleasing incident of her visit was the meeting with one, who, as a poor and neglected Protestant orphan boy, had been the recipient of her kindness thirty years before in Wheeling; and as a prosperous business man of a large eastern city, came to St. Louis to make grateful acknowledgment to his benefactress, and to give an account of his successful life as the head of a practical Catholic family. Dear to Sister Saint Protais as was the place of her first abode in America, she pleaded to return to her obscure Indian mission among the pines. Her request was granted, and her remaining years were spent at Baraga.[18]

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[18] Two of the pioneer Sisters died in France, Mother Febronie Fontbonne and Sister Febronie Chapellon. The former, after a stroke of paralysis suffered in the fall of 1880, was an invalid for six months, until her death at Changy on Palm Sunday, April 10, 1881. She was seventy-five years of

TOWER AND COURT, MOTHER HOUSE

As the Congregation grew in numbers, ever increasing demands for Sisters were made on Reverend Mother, many of which she supplied, sending colonies in 1880 to orphan asylums in Kansas City and St. Joseph, Missouri, and a hospital in Georgetown, Colorado. These missions were followed in the next decade by the opening of schools in Wisconsin, Colorado, Michigan, Illinois and Missouri. In the last named state were commenced six, three of which were in St. Louis: St. Anthony's in 1883, St. Teresa's and the Holy Name in 1886, all in flourishing parishes, where parents and zealous pastors co-operated with the Sisters in building up large and successful institutions.

The growth of St. Anthony's was remarkably rapid. Commenced in September, 1883, in a two room building with two teachers, Sisters Wilhemina Dekin and Lazarine Muettinger, who drove each day from Carondelet, it registered the following fall one hundred and fifty pupils. A new school built in 1889 by Reverend Innocent Wapelhorst, the distinguished Franciscan liturgist, who was then pastor, accommodated four hundred and fifty students; and was enlarged by successive additions which increased it to its present capacity of eight hundred girls and boys, the higher classes of the latter being taught by the Brothers of Mary. Sister Aloysius Andres, appointed Superior at St. Anthony's in 1884, directed the work of the Sisters there for twenty-seven years; and to her efforts, more than to any other single factor, is due the reputation of the school for thoroughness and efficiency.

Many of the parochial schools, in St. Louis were in adjoining parishes, each with its small community; and Reverend Mother Agatha, having in mind the greater spiritual and educational advantages of the large group, established in 1885 a central house, to which the teachers from four schools removed in the summer

age, sixty-one of which she had spent in religion. The particulars of her death were written to Carondelet by Sister Febronie, who had lived with her for forty-nine years. Sister Febronie also died at Changy, January 3, 1890. The death of Mother Saint John Fournier, companion of Mother Celestine, occurred at Philadelphia, Oct. 15, 1875.

of that year, and where they were joined in the two following years by those from three others. On August 24, 1885, the new convent was blessed by Very Reverend Philip Brady, Vicar-General of St. Louis, and placed under the patronage of Our Lady of Good Counsel. Sister Adele Hennessey was appointed Superior of this house, where, as directress of schools, she was brought into closer touch than before with the work of the teachers and summer institutes.

At the Convent of Our Lady of Good Counsel was held in 1894, the first teachers' institute in St. Louis participated in by Sisters of various orders from the city and surrounding places. It was conducted by lay teachers, and on this account evoked criticism from Catholic editors and others who looked with disfavor on the experiment. Its good results were manifested, however, in the greater confidence which the Sisters felt in their own methods, and the readiness with which they adopted and assimilated whatever they found better in those of others.

In 1884, there had been published by the Sisters of St. Joseph for their own use the *School Manual,* explained in its introduction as "not so much a new method as a compilation of the best methods already in use by our Sisters." The old French manual, adapted in translation to the needs of American schools, had served an excellent purpose in the training of young teachers. It had gradually given place to other methods, formulated in teachers' meetings and institutes. When the need of a printed manual in the hands of each teacher became imperative, a committee of the most experienced teachers in the Congregation was appointed to prepare a course of study for both elementary and high school grades. Chief among these Sisters were Sister Adele Hennessey, Sister Celestine Howard, directress of schools in the St. Paul Province, Sister Gertrude Conway, and Sister Teresa Louise Crowley.

After a prolonged study of conditions and of the best methods and courses in use throughout the country, they completed in 1883 the manual published the following year, which proved of in-

valuable assistance to the Sisters of Saint Joseph, and was in general use among them until the appearance in 1905 of the diocesan course for the parochial schools of the St. Louis Archdiocese. In the preparation of the manual, as stated in the introduction,

> The best features in each teacher's way of conducting school exercises were carefully examined and compared before being presented for general use. . . . It was considered that to restrict the teachers to particular ways of conducting different studies would be to close the door to future improvements, as new ideas and suggestions on these subjects are constantly appearing. What is to be desired in our schools is uniformity in movement, while giving variety in instruction.[19]

The book is divided into three parts, the first devoted to the general plan of the schools, the classification of pupils and regulations for school and classroom management. The second part contains the general course of study for the grades and four years of high school work, with suggestions as to the best method of teaching each graded subject; and includes a very complete course for the first eight years in nature study and the elements of science. In the third part are found general remarks on health and sanitation, the proper arrangement of school buildings, the collection of teachers' libraries, and the keeping of records. The whole is comprised in a volume of eighty-two pages, and has received many encomiums from competent teachers outside the Congregation.

To the schools in St. Louis already mentioned in charge of the Sisters of St. Joseph were added St. Leo's in 1893, the Holy Rosary in 1900, St. Ann's in 1901, and All Saints and St. Matthew's in 1902. Of St. Leo's the pastor was Reverend J. J. Harty, later Archbishop of Manila, whose tireless exertions in behalf of Catholic education gave to his school an enviable prestige.

[19] *School Manual for the Use of the Sisters of St. Joseph,* p. I. St. Louis, 1884.

In the long history of the St. Louis parish schools, crowded in most instances to their full capacity, and drawing pupils from congested business districts as well as from beautiful residential sections, but one disaster is recorded, the partial destruction by fire of St. Lawrence's on February 2, 1900, and the resulting death of Sister Stanislaus Mahoney. In her music room on the third floor, the young Sister, engaged in giving a lesson to Mary Foley, nine years old, evidently remained oblivious to what was happening, while all the others were quietly passing from the building. When her absence was discovered, every approach to the music room through the corridors was cut off. Brave firemen entered from outside, and groping through the smoke filled rooms, found the unconscious Sister, her little pupil clasped in her arms, a crucifix which she had snatched from the wall above her piano pressed to her breast. Reverently the two were passed out the window of the burning school, and borne through the silent throng of breathless children, women in tears, and men with bared heads, to the nearby hospital of the Franciscan Sisters, where three physicians endeavored in vain to restore them to consciousness. Sister Stanislaus was the first to succumb, and a quarter of an hour later, Mary Foley followed her into eternity. Archbishop Kain appeared early on the scene of the tragedy, with sympathy for the sorrowing companions of Sister Stanislaus and words of consolation for the heart-broken mother of her pupil. Many of the city schools were closed through respect the following day, and hundreds of school children tip-toed up the long aisle of the convent chapel where Sister lay, cold in death; while other hundreds brought flowers to the bereaved home of little Mary Foley. "Sister Stanislaus and Companion, Martyrs," was the caption of an editorial in the *Western Watchman* of February 9, a touching tribute to teacher and pupil, dead at their post of duty.

The parochial school system of St. Louis was reorganized during the episcopacy of Most Reverend John J. Kain, who came

PETER RICHARD KENRICK
FIRST ARCHBISHOP OF ST. LOUIS
1806–1895

in 1893 as Coadjutor to the venerable Archbishop Kenrick. He had scarcely entered upon his duties, when, in March 1896, Archbishop Kenrick was called to his eternal rest. In the death of this great churchman, the Congregation of St. Joseph mourned a friend whose interest in its welfare had extended through more than half a century. When in 1841 he came to his western see as Bishop Rosati's coadjutor, he found in Carondelet a small community of twelve Sisters with one girls' academy, a village school, and a few deaf-mutes. At the golden jubilee of his consecration in 1891, hundreds of boys and girls taught by the Carondelet Sisters in St. Louis alone, were among the five thousand school children who paid him homage in the exercises at the Colosseum in honor of the event. An address given in expressive pantomime by a large class of children from the Deaf-Mute Institute, and referred to by Archbishop Ryan, the orator of the occasion, as a tribute of silence, was the only number of the elaborate programme which elicited any expression of emotion from the distinguished jubilarian. He had always been solicitous for these afflicted children. The prelate of Philadelphia, also, on the rare occasions which brought him to St. Louis, manifested his interest by visits to the Institute. His sympathy for the silent boys and girls did not hinder his ready flow of wit. "A deaf and dumb Ryan! Impossible!" was his exclamation in feigned astonishment and with tragic gesture, when, on one occasion, a small boy of his own name was among the pupils presented to him.

In May 1896, new councillors were elected in the persons of Sister Herman Joseph O'Gorman and Sister Agnes Gonzaga Ryan, a woman of unusual ability, and intended in the Providence of God to succeed Reverend Mother Agatha as Superior-General. The former replaced Mother St. John Facemaz, who, during the last five years of her long life, until her death October 30, 1900, was tried by suffering, and gave a glorious example to the Congregation of patience, humility and

fortitude. Like her predecessor in the Council, Sister Herman Joseph belonged to that class of noble souls who find no sacrifice too great that they can make for God.

She was born in Oswego, New York, of Irish parentage, March 17, 1846, and after four years spent there in the Sisters' school, entered the novitiate in Carondelet in 1862, receiving the habit on December 8 of that year. The eldest in a family of five girls, she was followed eventually by her four sisters, all of whom became members of the Carondelet community. She held many prominent positions in the Congregation; and as teacher in the class room or superior of large houses, was always animated by the same high sense of honor which shrank from the very shadow of an untruth, and held as a sacred trust the confidence of even the smallest child. Honest and straightforward, and in the highest degree humble and obedient, she required or expected of others nothing that she did not do herself, setting always the example of zeal, charity and devotion to duty. She was a close student of books, applying herself to serious subjects; and she encouraged the Sisters to continual efforts at self-improvement along some chosen line, ranking intellectual culture as a help to spiritual advancement. Her reverence in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament was an inspiration to those privileged to witness it; and her influence as a councillor was always exerted towards strict observance and great vigilance in the admission of subjects to the Congregation.

In the early nineties Sister Winifred Sullivan, after years spent on the missions, became again a member of the household at Carondelet, where the large museum was her special charge. From far and near, she gathered objects of historical interest and value, and rare products of nature, which she used as a means of impressing on the minds of others the beauty and the wisdom of God as manifested in His works. In the library, Sister Mary Charles Brennan presided for a quarter of a century; and with infinite patience and a fund of erudition, directed eager readers along pleasant paths of literature, or over the stony road of dry

research. Under improved conditions and with greater accommodations, Nazareth was now a home for the aged or infirm Sisters, many of whom, grown old in the service of the Master, returned from the missions to rest in the quiet retreat. The circles of mounds increasing year by year in the hill-side graveyard marked the passing of lives rich in merit and good works, their example and the story of their deeds an inspiration to others following in their footsteps.

A lesson in the science of the saints is a visit to this portion of God's acre, dedicated to so many lowly, hidden souls, unknown in life except to those who came in closest contact with them. Sister Peter Richard Kelly, bent from early morning until late at night in the performance of humble duties, like Martha busy about many things, her every step offered as a prayer; Sister Barbara Keon, whose life-long wish was granted of dying in the Sacramental Presence; Sister Cecilia Rosteing—*Madame Cecile,* the Sisters called her—trained to graceful manners in her aristocratic home in France, picking her steps daintily for years in Carondelet's alley ways to bring help or cheer to the poor and sick: these and scores of others rest under the cedar trees at Nazareth, worthy daughters of Mother Celestine, their graves grouped about her own earthly resting place,[20] a name the only legend on each small headstone.

On this hallowed place the hand of God was laid in blessing in 1901, when, in answer to fervent prayers, occurred on March 19 of that year, the sudden cure of Sister Laura Kuhn. For eighteen years Sister Laura was a constant sufferer from a malady that baffled medical skill. During the greater part of that time, her only sustenance was liquid food. Malignant cancer of the stomach finally developed, which became external, causing untold suffering. It was pronounced incurable by three physicians; and the invalid, several times prepared for death,

[20] The remains of Mother Celestine, Sister Mary Joseph Dillon and other Sisters buried at Carondelet were removed to the Nazareth cemetery shortly after it was laid out in 1874.

still lived on in agonies of pain. So intense did this become, that she began a novena of Communions in honor of St. Joseph before his feast in 1901, begging for a cure or a happy death, according to God's will. With great difficulty on the morning of St. Joseph's day, the sufferer reached the chapel, a few steps from her room. Returning after Communion, she fell into the first restful sleep that she had known for years. The Sisters, surprised at finding her so, left her undisturbed. She awoke free from pain. Realizing fully that her prayer of faith had been answered, she hastened to the chapel, and on her knees before the altar, burst into tears. "I had begged to be relieved of my cross," she said to the writer in the summer of 1918; "and fearing lest I had not done well, I asked God to give it back to me, if my bearing it to the end would please him better."

On examination, the great wound was found to be perfectly healed, deep scars being the only evidence that it had ever existed; and the linen wrappings were dry and fresh. Doctor Samuel J. Will, a non-Catholic physician under whose care Sister Laura had been for two years, gave his written testimony to the remarkable cure, an account of which appearing in the public press attracted nation-wide attention. Sister Laura's deposition was taken by the Archbishop of St. Louis, Most Reverend John J. Kain, in the presence of the Reverend Chancellor and other witnesses; and an official statement prepared and signed by them attested the miraculous nature of the occurrence.

The little room in which St. Joseph's power was so marvellously felt was converted into an oratory in remembrance of an event which sent a thrill of awe through the entire Congregation. The Brothers of the Holy Cross at Notre Dame, Indiana, through Venerable Brother Paul, who was a guest at Nazareth in the spring of 1901, begged the privilege of preparing the shrine, placing in it an altar made by their own hands as an offering to the saint who is never invoked in vain.

CHAPTER XII

ON THE MISSION FIELD. DEATH OF REVEREND MOTHER AGATHA GUTHRIE (1904)

In the decade between 1870 and 1880, the South was several times swept by yellow fever, which decimated the population of large cities, and paralyzed the activities of whole sections of the country. In 1873, the fever made its first appearance in Memphis; and in the early fall of 1874, Florida was in the grasp of the plague.

At St. Joseph's Convent in Warrington, Florida, during the summer were Sister Alexandrine Erkolum, Sister Odilia Dunn and Sister Anna Teresa Burke. They were joined late in August by Sister Clotilda Kennedy, a delicate young Sister who was sent south on account of the mild climate. After spending part of the summer vacation at St. Patrick's Convent in Mobile, she arrived at Warrington just before the outbreak of the pestilence. The school term had hardly begun, when the Sisters, closing their half-emptied class rooms, assumed the rôle of nurses, going from house to house wherever there was need of their ministrations.

On September 20, Sister Alexandrine wrote to St. Louis: "Pray, and send word to my parents to pray and have Masses said that we may be spared to take care of the sick and dying." [1] The following day, Sister Alexandrine, Sister Anna Teresa and Sister Clotilda were seized with the dreaded symptoms; and for eight days they bore without a murmur the intense suffering which their remaining companion, Sister Odilia, strove heroically to alleviate.

On the morning of September 29, there came from a convent of Dominican nuns in Pensacola, across the little bay from War-

[1] Written into *Community Records* of 1874.

rington, Sister Mary Pius, a member of the small community there, risking her own life to be of help to Sister Odilia and her stricken Sisters. The latter were beyond hope of recovery, and at half-past five that bright autumn afternoon Sister Alexandrine breathed her last. At half-past six, Sister Clotilda died; and at eight o'clock, Sister Teresa followed her two companions into eternity. Sister Mary Pius kept a lonely night vigil with Sister Odilia, and at five o'clock the following morning, with the pastor of Warrington and a large number of his fearless flock, the two Sisters followed the remains to their burial. Sister Odilia then went to Pensacola, where, after a light attack of the fever, from which she was nursed back to health by the Dominican Sisters, she awaited in Mobile the arrival from the Mother House of Mother Julia Littenecker and Sister Theodora McCormack, sent by Reverend Mother to investigate conditions on the desolated mission.

Human prudence urged the closing of the convent and school; but in deference to the wishes of both pastor and people of Warrington and the pleading of brave Sister Odilia, she was allowed to return in January 1875, three other Sisters being sent from Carondelet to accompany her. One of these was Sister Evangelista Meehan, a successful and accomplished music teacher, who had formed one of the original colony sent to Albany, New York, in 1861. She survived but one year in the tropical climate, dying February 18, 1876. Her funeral was attended by the entire congregation of Warrington, and by the officers of a fleet of United States warships, then anchored in Pensacola Bay. Sister Odilia's death occurred two months later; and Reverend Mother Agatha, not wishing to sacrifice other lives in a fever-infected region, withdrew the Sisters at the close of the school term in 1876, to the sorrow of the people of Warrington, who showed their grateful remembrance in the care which they continued to lavish on five well-kept graves. Pensacola was soon after abandoned by the Dominican Sisters,

whose friendship was one of the prized memories retained by the survivors of the southern mission. "Our interests were common; whatever one community needed, the other was ready to give," wrote, many years after, Sister Mary Pius,[2] her assertion proved by her own devotion in facing pestilence to help her suffering neighbors.

In Memphis, an outbreak of cholera during June and July of 1873 was followed in September of the same year by yellow fever, which during the eighty days of its continuance, claimed sixteen hundred victims.[3] Eight hundred of these were from one of the four parishes of the city, St. Bridget's, of which Reverend Martin Walsh was pastor.[4] At St. Patrick's Academy in an adjoining parish, Sister Leonie Martin was Superior; and after an attack of fever from which she recovered, she assisted Sisters Clarissa Walsh, Immaculate Donohue, Antoinette Ogg, and De Sales Morissey in caring for the sick and dying until the yellow visitant was put to flight by a heavy frost in the middle of November.

Memphis had hardly recovered from the staggering effects of this calamity, when in 1878 the pestilence broke out afresh with greater violence than before. "If the fever of 1873 was a plague, that of 1878 was a veritable scourge," wrote one eye-witness [5] of the terrible scenes that accompanied both visitations. Within a few weeks after the appearance of fever in the summer of 1878, the city was transformed into one vast charnel place, where a thousand [6] yellow flags floated over the homes of the stricken ones, and the odor of burning tar and other disinfectants filled the air. During the first three days after the announcement

[2] November 2, 1919, from St. Catherine's, Kentucky.

[3] Among these were five priests and twenty Sisters. REV. D. A. QUINN, *Heroes and Heroines of Memphis*, p. 54. Providence R. I., 1887.

[4] QUINN, *op. cit.*, p. 54. Father Walsh was a victim the following year, his death occurring August 29, 1878.

[5] QUINN, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[6] By the middle of August the deaths numbered 958. QUINN, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

of the epidemic by the Board of Health, thirty thousand people fled from the city.[7] "I well remember the panic that almost crazed the populace the morning it was first announced," wrote Father Quinn; "men, women, and children in wagons, street cars, and carriages, all dashing through the streets on the way to the various railway depots and steamboat landings." [8] From fifteen to twenty coaches, usually drawn by three locomotives, made up each passenger train that left the city.

There were three Sisters at St. Patrick's at the time, the others having gone to St. Louis for the annual retreat. These three, Sisters Clarissa, Lydia Bulger and Irene Halter, were occupied for three weeks in assisting Father William Walsh, of St. Bridget's parish, to send out appeals to the benevolent societies of the United States for help in establishing, three and one-half miles from the city on Fontaine Farm, Camp Father Matthew, to which, taught by the fearful lesson of 1873, he removed with his four hundred parishioners.

By the end of August, the fever had spread to St, Patrick's, where the pastor, Very Reverend Martin Riordan, Vicar-General, and his assistant, Father Patrick McNamara, were among the earliest victims, the latter dying on September 3. On the same day, Sister Irene, a young Sister in her twenty-second year, who had feared the fever very much, but offered to remain when Reverend Mother gave her the option of returning to St. Louis, was stricken with the dread disease, received the last Sacraments, and, in a trance-like condition, heard herself pronounced dead.[9] Her name was registered on the official list for burial on September 4; but she had rallied before then and she soon recovered. Sister Irene had come to America in her childhood from Switzerland; and though small and slight, had the strong constitution and the will to conquer difficulties characteristic of the people of her native mountains. In a short time she was again at

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[9] SISTER IRENE HALTER. *Account of the Memphis Epidemic*, in *Community Archives.*

work among the suffering with her companions, who were joined in the meantime by Sister Leonie and Sister Antoinette. These had been hurriedly sent South as volunteers, when conditions there were reported at the Mother House.

During the epidemic of the following summer, scarcely less violent than that of 1878, Sisters Clarissa, Antoinette and Irene, veteran nurses by that time and apparently immune wherever there was yellow fever, volunteered for Camp Father Matthew, where Father Walsh had renewed his experiment of the preceding year. On a two hundred acre farm, in the midst of which was a boiling spring, the camp was located. Tents secured from the War Department were so arranged as to form streets, which were named after the Sacred Heart, the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, and which led to a tiny chapel enclosed on three sides, where daily Mass was heard by all, kneeling under the open sky in view of the altar of the Sacred Heart. Contributions from Catholic societies throughout the United States poured into the camp, which had its commissary department and corps of officers, and where strict quarantine regulations were observed. No one left the grounds except the priests on their visitation of the sick and dying, and those whom duty or errands of mercy called to the city.

The three Sisters who had volunteered for this place left St. Louis August 1, after the summer retreat. They were obliged to travel on a freight train, as no passenger trains were allowed to enter Memphis. Arrived at the camp, they were assigned their duties. Sister Irene gathered the children in an improvised school room, and for two hours daily taught them Catechism and the hymns and litanies which were sung in the evening processions through the streets of the tented village. Sisters Antoinette and Clarissa drove each morning to the city, where the death rate was from eighty to one hundred a day. They distributed food and medicine to the sick and prepared the dying for the reception of the Sacraments. The Angel of Mercy and the Angel of Comfort they were respectively designated by a

grateful people, among whom they met with but one instance where their visit was not wholly welcome.

A father, mother and little boy lay dying in a home marked with the yellow signal. From the Sisters when they entered, the two former turned away, refusing all proffered help; but the child stretched out weak arms to the strange visitors. He recognized the image on the crucifix which Sister showed him, and to her inquiry, "Would you like to go to Him?" he answered with unconscious wisdom: "Yes, but I do not know the way." Calling for a glass of water, which was brought her by the Howard nurse [10] in charge, Sister poured the saving drops on his fevered head; and child and parents passed into eternity. But one death occurred at the camp that summer, where Sister Irene, when free from the class room duties, spent her time among the sick. It was that of a boy of eighteen, whom the Sisters, returning one evening from the city, overtook by the road side. Bent on adventure, he had walked from his home in Winona, Minnesota; and, sick and weary, was easily persuaded by the Sisters to accompany them to Camp Father Matthew. In his pockets were found affectionate letters from his mother, who was duly informed of his happy death.

It was years before Memphis recovered from the disastrous effects of these epidemics, which had threatened the existence of the Nashville diocese,[11] depriving it of twenty-two priests and hundreds of prominent Catholics. The immediate prospects of St. Patrick's Academy were ruined, and the future gave small promise of success at least for years to come. Under the circumstances, Reverend Mother, in the fall of 1879, reluctantly called home the Sisters for an indefinite period. On November 10, 1879, Bishop Feehan, expressing to her his regret that the unhappy condition of Memphis rendered such a step necessary wrote:

[10] The Howard Association was a benevolent society organized in 1873, which provided nurses and received aid from Masonic fraternities. QUINN, op. cit., p. 111.

[11] QUINN, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

I feel under very great obligations to you and your good Sisters for all the good that they have done in Memphis, and especially for their heroic devotion during the yellow fever. Their spirit of sacrifice will, I am sure obtain for them and their communities many and great blessings.[12]

The *Ave Maria* of January 21, 1902, announcing the death of Father William Walsh, recalled the incident of Camp Father Matthew and the devoted pastor's

splendid courage, which at a single stroke tore away the veil of prejudice from the public eye in that sunny Southland where the Church has been so backward and prejudice so forward.

Of the Sisters who were Father Walsh's right-hand helpers, "as fearless and zealous as himself," it said:

The heroism of these noble spirits arrested the admiring attention of the whole country; and so vivid is the remembrance of it even now that we are assured Memphis is the least salubrious climate in the world for those who utter calumnies against priests and Sisters.

The fruit of the Sisters' heroism and of the sacrifices made by the Congregation during the whole of the dreadful period was reaped within the next two decades through increased activities in other places, especially in the North and West. In Mobile, also, where the yellow scourge had spread gloom and desolation, and of two Sisters stricken with the plague, Sister Agnes Rossiter and Sister Aurelia Catherine Cashin, the latter laid down her young life in sacrifice October 22, 1878, three schools were added to the one begun in 1873; namely, the Cathedral school for boys, and two where children of mixed white and negro blood—Creoles, the Alabamans call them—could be given an elementary education. This class had always evoked Reverend Mother's interest; and examples brought to her attention of their

[12] *Bishop Feehan* to *Mother Agatha,* Nov. 10, 1879. On September 10, 1880, Bishop Feehan was promoted to the Archbishopric of Chicago.

ignorance of God, revealed in their replies to questioning, aroused her sympathy.

Typical of a hundred others was the small waif, called by the Sisters from her sport of chasing butterflies and told about her creation and the object of her existence. In wide-eyed wonder, she mused aloud after each bit of information: "I never knew I was made for anything. Nobody ever told me that." More open-minded was the little maid than her dusky brother, whose agility saved him from an avalanche of logs brought down by his own awkwardness in dislodging one; and whose terror gave place to contempt for the supposed ignorance of his questioner, when a Sister asked him, not clearly perhaps, but with interested curiosity as to his mental attitude toward a future life: "Where would you be now if you had not jumped aside?" With literal truth as he saw it, and in a tone of finality, the answer came, "Under the woodpile, of course." Efforts at spiritual enlightenment were useless there.

Such incidents were to Reverend Mother so many tragedies of darkened souls to which the light had never penetrated; and she gladly gave a portion of the convent property in 1896 on which to build a school, supplying teachers for the same, as well as for one opened by the Bishop in the Cathedral parish. These were later merged into one, which, though numerically small, has been productive of incalculable good. The eagerness of the Creole mind for knowledge is exemplified in one old grandmother, who sat daily on the benches among the children until she had learned to read and write. No other community name is so closely associated with the schools of Mobile as that of Sister Scholastica Sullivan, who through years of labor, won an undying place in the warm hearts of the Mobilians by her winning personality and genial ways.

In Indianapolis, the Sacred Heart School, in the German parish of the Franciscan Fathers, prospered steadily. It was established in September 1877, when eighty-five pupils were enrolled in two class rooms on the first floor of a three story build-

ing which the Fathers had erected for church, school and monastery combined. The Sisters, four in number, resided until the following year in a cottage placed at their disposal by a devout widow of the parish, Mrs. Frances Frommhold, who, after giving all she had to church and school, entered the novitiate in Troy in February 1878, receiving the name of Sister Clarissa. In June, 1878, an additional piece of property was purchased by the Sisters for a girls' school. This property, which is now in the heart of the city, was then surrounded by meadow lands and cornfields. The blessing on October 4 of the convent and school erected on this site was the first official act of Right Reverend Francis Silas Chatard as Bishop of Vincennes, to which diocese Indianapolis then belonged. One hundred and fifty pupils, exclusive of the large boys, who were left in care of the Franciscan Brothers, were removed to the new school, enlarged in 1885 to accommodate twice that number. Ten years later, another large building, erected by the parish for the boys, received its quota of Sister teachers; and a splendid eight-room high school, completed in 1914, is the latest edition to the group. For thirty years, Sister Lidwina Littenecker, appointed Superior in 1880, directed the work of these rapidly growing schools, which average over seven hundred pupils, and which have trained scores of efficient men and women for the commercial and social world, and furnished an incredibly large number of vocations to the priesthood and the religious orders.

The main factor in the foundation of St. Joseph's Orphan Home for Girls in Kansas City, Missouri, was the pioneer pastor, Reverend Bernard Donnelly, who, after securing from Reverend Mother a promise of Sisters to care for the orphans, purchased a ten-acre tract of woodland south of the city, and began the erection of a building, the corner stone of which he laid on May 4, 1879. Prominent among the first band of Sisters who assisted at the opening Mass on January 15, 1880, were Sisters Delphine Bray and Alicia McCusker, whose long lives were identified with charitable work. Many inconveniences were ex-

perienced in the beginning. The home was in the midst of a forest outside the city limits, was poorly equipped, and entirely dependent on voluntary subscriptions, which the Sisters were obliged to solicit in the city. The earliest benefactor was a prominent Kansas Cityan, Major Blake L. Woodson, who provided dormitory furnishings to replace the children's first cots, improvised out of store boxes.

"The Sisters will not be left alone in their efforts to befriend these children," said the founder, on the occasion of his last visit to the asylum a few weeks before his death on December 14, 1880. "Good, kind people will perfect the work which I, in my humble way, began." [13] So it proved. Benefactors were not wanting; and on the coming of Bishop Hogan to Kansas City in 1886, diocesan funds were appropriated to the use of the Home, partly relieving the Sisters of the burden of support. The annual picnic given for years under the auspices of the Orphan Association was another welcome source of income, until the substitution of yearly collections in the diocese. The rapid growth of the city southward, and the opening of picturesque Penn Valley Park and Park Drive, fronting the Home, enhanced the value of the property, and added beauty to the surroundings. With numerous improvements and additions, notably the erection of a large chapel in 1895, the gift of Thomas Corrigan and family, the capacity and usefulness of the institution was increased; and under the direction of Sister Brigid Callahan for thirty years, hundreds of young girls were trained to fill useful positions in life. In February, 1921, the home was almost completely destroyed by fire. The Sweeney estate with its accommodations was immediately turned over by the owner to the Sisters and children for an indefinite period; and there rallied to the help of the institution many generous friends, foremost among whom was Right Reverend Thomas F. Lillis, Bishop of Kansas City, with whose encouragement and under whose direction the building quickly rose again. Since 1913, the school

[13] *The Orphan Girls' Annual.* p. 9. Kansas City 1909.

maintained at the Home is in the unique position of belonging to the City's system of public schools, supervised by the Board of Education.

To the initiative of Bishop Hogan was due the establishment of St. Mary's Orphanage for boys in St. Joseph, Missouri, on a tract donated by John Corby for a cemetery, and known as Corby Place. Five Sisters from Carondelet took charge in April 1880 of thirty-three orphan boys, housed in a frame building which had previously been occupied by the Alexian Brothers. Three years later, the boys were removed to a well-cultivated farm of forty acres, given to the Sisters by Francis Brown, a prominent and benevolent Catholic of St. Joseph, who also aided generously in the erection of the buildings. For twenty-five years, the Sisters maintained this place, until the orphan boys of the diocese were removed to the Perry Home in Kansas City.

The number of missions in western Missouri was increased by the opening in Kansas City of St. Patrick's School and the German School of Sts. Peter and Paul in 1882; Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the Redemptorist parish of that name, in 1884; St. John's in 1887; and St. Patrick's in St. Joseph, Missouri, begun in 1892, with an average attendance of three hundred and fifty pupils. One of the most successful of these is Our Lady of Perpetual Help, commenced in a two room frame building on a corner of the extensive grounds then belonging to the Redemptorist College, and intended to benefit the children of a few scattered families living on the outskirts of the city. Two Sisters residing at the Orphans' Home walked every day over the country roads, which their most vivid imaginings probably never converted into the broad thoroughfares on which are located the large church, school and convent buildings of today. The high school and commercial departments are important adjuncts, fitting the young people of the parish for college and for business life.

The first mission of the Congregation in the diocese of Green

Bay was in Shawano, Wisconsin, to which Reverend Mother sent a small community in October 1881, at the request of Reverend Vincent Halbfus, Provincial of the Franciscan Fathers of St. Louis. These Fathers were also in charge of the Catholic Indians on the Menominee Reservation at Keshena. In September 1883, five Sisters were delegated for the Industrial School established at Keshena by Reverend Zephyrin Engelhardt, then in Wisconsin. There was a government agency at the reservation, and a day school was maintained for the children of the Menominees, a branch of the Algonquin tribe. In 1880, this was converted into a boarding school. The Fathers of the mission, opposed by the agent in their efforts to instruct the Catholic children, built their own school, which was opened on November 21, 1883, in charge of Sister Clarissa Walsh.

Twice the school was destroyed by fire, the first time on February 22, 1884, only three months after the opening. New buildings were erected each time; and the appointment of a Catholic agent in 1885 facilitated the working of the school, which prospered in the face of great financial difficulties. Several buildings are required for the present activities of the school, and besides the Fathers and Brothers, ten Sisters are engaged in caring for two hundred and thirty-seven boys and girls. The skill of the children in the vocational arts was recognized in the medal awards of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, and their work was awarded second place at the diocesan exhibit at Green Bay in the same year. Much attention was attracted to the ingenuity and practical turn of mind evidenced by the boys in their construction of a miniature steam engine working a circular saw, a facsimile of one used on the reservation. For twenty years, from 1886 to 1906, a hospital for Menominees was supported at the reservation out of their tribal funds.

On March 25, 1887, a colony of seven Sisters of Saint Joseph from France came to the French parish of Oconto in Wisconsin on the invitation of its pastor, who had built a convent and school. They received an enthusiastic welcome from his con-

gregation on their arrival, and were met at the convent by Mother Saint John Facemaz, who, with Sister Herman Joseph O'Gorman, was sent by Reverend Mother Agatha to initiate the French Sisters in American ways. Sister Herman Joseph remained as English teacher to the community in Oconto for two years. In 1889, this community, consisting of five professed Sisters, two novices and two postulants, were affiliated to the Mother House at Carondelet, which then assumed the responsibility of their school. St. Joseph's School in West De Pere was added to the list of Wisconsin missions in 1893; and at the same time the Sisters of Saint Joseph inaugurated their long years of successful work in Green Bay.

"From Green Bay, Missouri received her first initiation in the mysteries of faith," writes the historian of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin, referring to the expedition of Marquette, which began in the Fox River and ended in the Illinois Country, and he mentions as a return of that meritorious deed "Missouri's gift to Green Bay of its first Bishop," [14] Right Reverend Joseph Melcher. The latter was, it will be remembered, before his appointment to the northern see, spiritual Father of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in St. Louis; but twenty years had elapsed from the time of his death in 1873 before the Sisters from Carondelet entered his episcopal city on the invitation of its fourth Bishop, Right Reverend Sebastian George Messmer.

Their first mission in Green Bay was the school of St. John the Evangelist, in the oldest parish of northern Wisconsin,[15] of which the Dominican missionary, Father Mazzuchelli, was pastor in 1831, and a future General of the Jesuits, Father Anderledy, was assistant in 1849.[16] It was the erection of the pioneer church of St. John that furnished to the former the occasion for a graphic description in his *Memoirs* [17] of the American manner

[14] H. H. HEMING, *The History of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin*, p. 570. Milwaukee, 1895–8.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 570.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 584.

[17] Page 59.

of building with logs, a process which interested him greatly. Two other churches had successively replaced this, the second being a handsome brick structure with graceful spires and artistic interior. Near this was the large school, opened in September 1893 with six Sisters and an enrollment of three hundred pupils, under the direction of Sister Herman Joseph O'Gorman.

Three years later, Reverend Mother Agatha, urged by Bishop Messmer to begin an academy for girls, secured the grounds and monastery formerly belonging to the Good Shepherd Sisters. Here a beginning was made on September 29, 1896, with nine students. In six years, the building could no longer accommodate those who applied for admission; and in 1902, the Superior, Sister Mechtilda Littenecker, was authorized to purchase property on Astor Heights, an exclusive residence district, for a new academy. One hundred and ten pupils were registered there in the fall of 1903; and in 1905, the school was accredited to the University of Wisconsin, having attained great efficiency through the efforts of Sister M. Sacred Heart Egan and Sister Irene O'Hara. Another academic building was found necessary in 1910, and provided gymnasium, auditorium, larger laboratories and additional class rooms, doubling the capacity of the academy.

Negaunee and Ishpeming—Indian names signifying respectively low and high—two prosperous cities in the northern peninsula in Michigan, received communities of Sisters from Carondelet in 1882 and 1884. The former, separated by Teal Lake from the dense pine forests on the north, untravelled except by hunters of bear and wild fowl, was the central depot for the iron and copper mines of Lake Superior. Its Catholic population consisted of French, Irish, and Germans, to which was added in the early days of the mining industry a small sprinkling of English converts. Sister Philomene Joyce was in charge of the first band of five teachers who opened St. Paul's school in September 1882. Large sodalities, organized by the pastor, Reverend Frederic Eis, later Bishop of Marquette, prepared the way for the success of the school, which registered three

hundred and sixteen pupils, nearly all the Catholic children in Negaunee. A rival to St. Paul's in numbers and success was St. John's at Ishpeming, also a center for the copper industry, three miles distant from Negaunee along the Michigan roads. Six Sisters were sent to Ishpeming in September 1884, and under the successive direction of Sister Mathilda, Sister Concordia Horan and Sister Agnes Rossiter, the school became in time an important factor in the educational system of the city.[18] Worthy of remark, apart from the zealous support given the school from its inception by the good Catholic people of Ishpeming, was the coöperation with the Sisters of the public school authorities and teachers.

The old St. Ann's parish in Hancock, having grown rapidly, was divided into St. Patrick's and St. Joseph's, the latter for the French and German population. In the former was the school begun in 1866; and for St. Joseph's parish a school was commenced in 1888 and supplied by Sisters sent from Carondelet by Reverend Mother Agatha. The last of the Michigan schools which she undertook was St. John the Baptist's at Menominee in 1902. In Marquette, on February 17, 1903, the coldest day of an unusually cold winter, fire broke out in the chapel wing of the academy, where numerous improvements had recently been completed. The intense cold and the freezing of the water mains hindered the firemen in their efforts to save the convent, and it was completely destroyed. The pupils were taken to the building on the convent grounds from which the orphans had recently been removed to Baraga, and which now furnished a residence for Sisters and boarders. The officials of Marquette placed at the disposal of the community an entire floor of the City Hall, where classes were resumed and continued for two years.

By that time was completed the Baraga School, a monument in brown stone to Bishop Baraga, erected by the parish and completely equipped for elementary and academic work for both

[18] REZEK, *History of Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie and Marquette* Houghton, Mich. 1906, vol. II, p. 245.

boys and girls. At the laying of the corner-stone on November 1, 1903, the fiftieth anniversary of the saintly Baraga's consecration, Marquette showed its appreciation of the long labors of the Sisters since in 1871 they had opened their school in the old Ursuline Academy. Four thousand people, including the City Council and prominent business and professional men, were present at the ceremony, which was performed by Bishops Eis of Marquette and Messmer of Green Bay.

In August 1883, a community of four Sisters, accompanied by Reverend Mother Agatha, left Carondelet for Denver to take charge of St. Patrick's School in what was then North Denver. Early as the season was, the travellers were snow-bound for forty-eight hours in Kansas. In North Denver they found fewer than a dozen houses scattered along mud roads, and surrounded by wide, uncultivated stretches of country. A combination church and school was still in an unfinished condition; and the temporary church, built of upright planks, let in wind and rain. Here, the morning after their arrival, with umbrellas raised to keep out the weather, the Sisters heard Mass; and then in a heavy snow storm, drove through wild gorges and rocky passes to Central City, where they enjoyed for three weeks the hospitality of the small community at St. Michael's Convent then in charge of Sister Prudentiana Shine. St. Michael's, perched on the side of the mountain, was attended by miners' children, hardy little mountaineers, who could enjoy the experience of a night spent on pallets by blazing fires in the class rooms, when cut off by blizzards from all possibility of reaching their homes. On September 29, the Sisters returned to Denver, and while Sister James Stanislaus Rogan and one assistant organized the classes—a total of forty-nine pupils—Reverend Mother, as the self-appointed manager of the culinary department, awaited the arrival of Sister Adele Hennessey from St. Louis to accompany her on a visitation of the Arizona missions. Like most of the schools which had small and unpretentious beginnings, St. Patrick's grew and prospered with the growth of the city; and

in 1893, the Sisters in Denver welcomed another colony sent from the Mother House to St. Francis de Sales' School, averaging three hundred pupils. In 1887, St. Thomas' School at Newton, and in 1898, the Sacred Heart School at Campus, both in Illinois, received communities from Carondelet.

The reputation of the Congregation reached Mexico, and in the early nineties there came to Reverend Mother petitions for Sisters from the Bishops of Leon, Pueblo de los Angeles and Oaxaca, in whose dioceses peculiar difficulties confronted Catholics in the matter of education, and charitable institutions under Catholic auspices were practically unknown, owing to the restrictions placed by the Government on native communities. In the spring of 1892, Mother Julia Littenecker and Sister Monica Corrigan were sent by Reverend Mother on a preliminary visit of investigation to Mexico, and reported conditions favorable in Leon, where elementary schools for poor children were desired, and also in Oaxaca, where the venerable Bishop Gillow had made preparations for secondary schools for girls. In both places, the civil authorities were bitterly anti-Catholic. Before arrangements were completed in Carondelet for sending Sisters to these distant fields, complications arose in Mexico which caused the abandonment of the project, leaving as the only result of protracted negotiations between the ecclesiastics of that country and the authorities in Carondelet, a voluminous correspondence which throws interesting side lights on the unenviable position of the Church in Mexico under the Constitution of 1857.

As a pleasing outcome of the Sisters' extended visit, and an evidence of the fertility of the field which they were obliged to leave untilled, a number of young Spanish girls of good families became students at the academy in St. Louis; and others, led by the grace of religious vocation, sought and obtained admission into the novitiate, becoming useful and edifying members of the Community. The membership of the Congregation was further increased in the spring of 1898 by the arrival from Ireland of a large number of capable young girls, the majority

of whom remained; and in 1900, a small community of diocesan Sisters of St. Joseph,[19] who had settled in Oklahoma at the request of Monsignor Ketcham and were conducting Nazareth Academy in Muskogee, followed the advice of Bishop Meerschaert and applied to the Mother House in St. Louis for affiliation. They were received, and their boarding and day schools then came under the jurisdiction of Carondelet.

On the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, Reverend Mother was called upon for army nurses; and the eleven Sisters whom she sent to serve in that capacity were delegated to the Second Division of the Volunteer Army, then in training at Camp Hamilton, near Lexington, Kentucky. Sister Liguori McNamara, for many years Superior of St. Joseph's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri, was in charge of the unit which left Carondelet October 28, 1898, for Camp Hamilton, and which consisted of Sisters Irmina Dougherty, Bonaventure Nealon, Delphine Dillon, Rudolph Meyers, and Raymond Ward, of the St. Louis Province, and Sisters Thecla Reid, Julitta Carroll, Blandina Geary, Florentia Downs, and Aloise O'Dowd, experienced nurses from the hospitals in St. Paul. On October 5, they took the oath of allegiance to the United States at Camp Hamilton, a city of tents, where, in temporary hospitals, six hundred troops were suffering from typhoid and malaria. Of the one hundred nurses in charge, forty-eight were religious, the Sisters of Charity from Emmitsburg and the Sisters of the Holy Cross having preceded the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

To Sister Liguori and her band, though they were accustomed to sick duty in hospitals, army life at first proved a novel experience; but they soon learned to obey taps and bugle calls, and in the midst of hardships, found many consolations. Their convent was a tent; and in its temporary chapel, Mass was said daily by the Reverend chaplain of the Twelfth New York Regiment, which formed part of the division. Day and night the Sisters relieved one another in the wards, their labors sweetened

[19] From Brooklyn, New York.

by the kind and helpful intercourse of the communities, one with the other, and rewarded by the restoration to health of by far the greater number of their patients. Many of these were mere boys, who had volunteered with ardor; but before their valor could be put to the test, were overcome by the insidious foes of fever and *nostalgia*. All were full of gratitude for the least service that rendered their surroundings more homelike.

From Kentucky, on the breaking up of Camp Hamilton, the Sisters of Saint Joseph were transferred on December 1 to Camp Gilman in Georgia, and in the beginning of the New Year, to Matanzas, Cuba. Before leaving for the latter place, they were visited by Reverend Mother, who, with Mother Seraphine Ireland of the St. Paul Province, left St. Louis immediately after Christmas for Georgia. The two superiors spent several memorable days in camp with the Sisters before the division started for Charleston, South Carolina, its point of departure for Matanzas. This city was reached January 3, 1899, just after the surrender of the port. In Matanzas, the Sisters assumed charge of a government hospital, fitted up in an old Spanish mansion overlooking the bay, where they continued their work of mercy until the middle of April 1899, caring for scores of typhoid patients, all of whom recovered. On April 1, a young civilian died, a victim of yellow fever in a violent form. He had been received at the hospital and placed in the care of Sister Liguori, who was afterwards quarantined for three weeks in a tent on the flat roof of the hospital building. On April 22, there being no further need of their services in the Volunteer Army, the Sisters resigned their commission and returned to Carondelet. They were urged to remain and direct an orphan asylum which the United States military authorities in Matanzas wished carried on by Americans. To this project, Reverend Mother would not consent; nor was it desired by Archbishop Chapelle, recently appointed Vicar-Apostolic of Cuba, who wisely desired to effect no immediate changes in existing conditions.[20]

[20] *Spanish War Correspondence.* Oct. 5, 1898 to April 22, 1899.

After her return from Cuba, Sister Liguori was sent to take charge of a hospital in Hancock, Michigan. This had been for three years under a community of Sisters who had failed to make it a success; and at the urgent request of the Administrator of the Marquette diocese, Reverend Mother reluctantly took the property. The first years were difficult ones for the staff of six Sisters, who, in cramped quarters and with poor equipment had to make suitable provision for patients and restore the confidence of physicians and surgeons. To increase their trials, a trapper brought from L'Anse for treatment in the summer of 1900 developed smallpox, which was communicated to four other inmates of the hospital. These were placed in quarantine in the long-unused pest house, a five-room frame building on the outskirts of the city, Sister Liguori and Sister Delphine accompanying them as nurses. During their five week's isolation, the two Sisters and their patients received great sympathy and kindness from the people of Hancock, who continually provided them with comforts and conveniences. Two Sisters from St. Patrick's convent in the city, where Sister Baptista Montgomery was Superior, walked every day to the improvised hospital, and from the opposite side of the country road which the quarantine regulations did not permit them to cross, sent cheering messages to the voluntary prisoners.

God rewarded the unselfishness of the Sisters and their faithful devotion to duty in the face of danger. Success and patronage came their way, and good friends were not wanting. In August, 1903, ground was broken for the new St. Joseph's Hospital on one of the most healthful and beautiful sites of Hancock, fronting Portage Lake. Sister Liguori's long experience enabled her to plan well, and a four story Renaissance building of brick and sandstone, with attractive pillared entrance and complete interior equipment for a limited number of patients was dedicated on June 5, 1904. The Mayor and city officials of Hancock were among the throng of citizens whose attendance

at the ceremony testified their appreciation of the good accomplished by the Sisters in the preceding five years.

The last important work undertaken by Reverend Mother Agatha was the erection of Holy Family Chapel in Carondelet, the corner stone of which was laid on October 15, 1897, by Archbishop Kain of St. Louis. To the building and furnishing of this, she devoted the closing years of her life. The chapel is late Romanesque in style, the lofty arches of the ceiling supported on ornate Corinthian columns. An ambulatory runs around three sides of the clerestory, beneath which, as a unique feature, are the Stations of the Cross in round medallions, forming part of the decorative scheme. In the sanctuary are three marble altars, the main one being the gift of Mary Gillick of St. Louis, mother of the architect. A marble altar rail, presented by Mrs. Louise Sauer, encloses the transepts, the north one of which is the Martyrs' Chapel. In the south transept is a memorial altar in black and white marble, above which is a sculptured panel representing the death of Saint Joseph. This and the statues of the Apostles set around the walls of the ground story and the Holy Family group over the main altar, were done by Joseph Sibbel of New York. Bishop Eis of Marquette was the donor of a fine pipe organ, and many other friends of the Congregation deemed it a privilege to contribute to the noble edifice, a monument to Reverend Mother Agatha's zeal for the beauty of God's House. She had, herself, saved for years gold ornaments and jewelry, given up to her by different Sisters at their entrance into the novitiate; and this was utilized in the making of a chalice, an exquisite bit of workmanship, which, a little larger than ordinary size, contains four hundred and fifty pennyweight of pure gold, and is set with opals, amethysts, topazes and diamonds. Three months of continuous work on the part of engravers produced beautiful designs, symbolic wheat and grapes in green and gold, and initials outlined with gems.

In Holy Family Chapel was celebrated the golden jubilee of

Reverend Mother's profession. The fiftieth anniversary of that event fell on October 15, 1902; but the humble Superior-General, in order to avoid any demonstration in her honor, such as she knew the Sisters were preparing to make, quietly left the Mother House in the early fall of 1902 for an extended visitation of the province. On her return in February 1903, the postponed celebration took place, honoring Reverend Mother and with her Sister Mary Frances Thöne, her companion of 1850. The first of the three days' services was a Solemn High Mass appropriate to the occasion in Holy Family Chapel on February 5, the feast of Saint Agatha, followed in the afternoon by the academy student's jubilee entertainment, a splendid rendition of Gaul's oratorio, *Ruth,* introducing Biblical scenes and characters. On the afternoon of February 6, the Alumnæ presented a classical drama, *The Vestals;* and an elaborate musical programme on the following day at the Convent of Our Lady of Good Counsel closed the festivities, which were attended by the Archbishop of St. Louis, Most Reverend John J. Kain, and a number of clergy, as well as hundreds of Sisters and other friends of Reverend Mother. Reverend Mother Mary Bernard Elliot, Superior of the Sisters of Mercy in Vicksburg, Mississippi, an alumna of the Carondelet Academy, with her companion, Sister Mercedes, was the honored guest of her Alma Mater during the celebration.

For two years preceding this memorable event, Reverend Mother, who had always enjoyed perfect health, was weakening under the activities of her long and laborious life. Never by any conscious sign, did she make known her fatigues or ailments; but a complete breakdown in the early spring of 1903 revealed her real condition to the Sisters, who then realized that time would soon be at an end for her whom they loved so dearly. During a protracted illness, her submission to the decrees of Providence found frequent expression in: "God's will is best; may it be accomplished in me." Away from the heat of a St. Louis summer she was taken to the cooler climate of St. Paul, where, at St. Joseph's Hospital, she received every care

HOLY FAMILY CHAPEL, MOTHER HOUSE

and attention; but all that love and skill could do failed to effect a recovery or bring about more than a slight alleviation of her sufferings.

In October, she returned to Carondelet; and until the following January, she endured severe physical pain without complaint, receiving her Lord daily in Holy Communion, and though confined to bed, performing privately every spiritual exercise required by rule. To the last she desired and enjoyed the company of the Sisters, whom she did not wish kept from her sick room even on the plea of giving her thereby rest and quiet. On the morning of Saturday, January 16, 1904, the community of the Mother House was summoned to answer the prayers for the departing soul said by Reverend Bernardine Weis, of the Franciscan Fathers of St. Louis; and at half past eleven, Reverend Mother Agatha, conscious to the end, gave up her strong soul without a struggle to its Maker, her death, "a picture of moral beauty never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it."

The solemn Requiem Mass on Tuesday, January 19, was said by His Grace, Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis, assisted by Reverend Bernardine Weis and Reverend Patrick Dooley as deacon and sub-deacon, Reverend Fathers Connolly and McDonald as deacons of honor, and Reverend M. S. Brennan master of ceremonies. The sermon on the consoling text, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," was delivered by Reverend Patrick W. Tallon, a devoted friend of Mother Agatha and her community. Members of the Congregation from all part of the country, and more than two hundred clergy and religious of different orders of men and women filled the sombrely draped chapel, down the long aisle of which Reverend Mother's remains were borne by six of her life-long friends and co-laborers: Mothers Seraphine Ireland and Mary John Cary, Provincial Superiors, and Sisters Loyola Ryan, Justinê Lemay, Julia Littenecker and Liguori Monaghan.

The interment was at Nazareth, where the services at the grave were performed by the resident chaplain, Father Larche,

assisted by Reverend D. Healy of Sedalia, Missouri, Fathers McDonald and Cooney of St. Louis, and the Franciscan Fathers Bernardine, Francis and Timothy. The simple headstone which marked her last resting place gave no hint of Reverend Mother's nobility of soul or of her virtues. These were enshrined in the hearts of the poor and the afflicted whom she had so often aided, of the orphans whom she had befriended, of eighteen hundred Sisters who mourned the loss of a beloved Mother, and cherished her memory as a precious legacy. "You are rich in the traditions of the past," said her panegyrist, addressing her community, "you are rich in the number of your members; but most of all are you rich in the example that Mother Agatha has left you."

Reverend Mother had always disliked and shunned public notice; but the testimonials to her worth and character which appeared at her death gave evidence that the great work quietly accomplished by her in many fields had not escaped the attention of the religious world. A delayed cablegram received just after her death from Cardinal Mery del Val communicated the blessing *in articulo mortis of* Pope Pius X, who was informed of her condition by Monsignor Antonini, a friend of the Congregation located in Rome. The Alumnæ Association of St. Joseph's Academy adopted the following resolutions:

Whereas: It has pleased Almighty God in His infinite wisdom to remove from our midst our beloved Honorary President, Reverend Mother Agatha Guthrie; and

Whereas: In this dispensation of Providence, the Sisters of St. Joseph have lost a truly admirable Superior, a loving and beloved Mother, who has endeared herself to all by the simplicity of her life, by the tender solicitude manifested not only towards her daughters in religion, but towards each of us who came under her care; and

Whereas: The Alumnæ Association has lost a true, tried and valued friend, in whose great heart there was room for the best interest of every alumna; and who during the long period of her wise and beneficent administration has left our Alma Mater an admirable example of Christian love and fortitude, and

Whereas: We desire to give expression to the love and esteem which, we entertain for our dear departed Reverend Mother: therefore, be it

Resolved: That we extend our sincere and heartfelt condolence to her bereaved children, the Sisters of St. Joseph, and to all who, as pupils of St. Joseph's, have known her tender care: and be it

Resolved: That the Alumnæ Association of St. Joseph's Academy hereby give public testimony of the esteem in which Reverend Mother Agatha was so worthily held; and be it further

Resolved: That we strengthen within ourselves the resolution to carry out in our lives the high ideals formed for us by this noble Mother, this valiant woman, in whose life were exemplified all womanly virtues, that thereby we may the better prove our appreciation of her interest in us and our gratitude to God in whose presence we confidently hope one day to be gathered around our venerated and lamented Mother; and be it

Resolved: That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the association, and that a copy of them be suitably engraved and presented to the Sisters of St. Joseph's Academy.

MARY QUINLAN, Chairman

CHAPTER XIII

THE CONGREGATION IN THE EAST. (1858–1922)

THE first house of the Congregation in the diocese of Albany was opened at Oswego, in 1858. This diocese differed widely in both social and religious aspects from those in the central and northern sections of the country which the Sisters entered at an earlier period. Primitive conditions had long since given place to modern ones; and pioneer endeavors, to old and established customs. General prosperity followed in the wake of internal improvements, the building of roads and canals, milling and farming industries. In the Catholic population of eastern New York, there had been a steady growth for more than half a century, when Albany, successively under the jurisdiction of Baltimore and New York since 1789, became in 1847 an independent see.

Great tides of immigration in the following decade, much of it due to intolerable conditions in Ireland, increased the number of Catholics, and contributed to the building of churches and the formation of large parishes. The first Bishop of Albany, later the first American Cardinal, John McCloskey, came into a territory as rich in sacred memories as in historical traditions. Missionaries had shed their blood in the country of the Mohawks and endured torture and death there that the Faith might live. The new prelate was remarkably zealous in spreading the Faith for which the martyred Isaac Jogues had suffered at the hands of cruel captors, and which had won a gentle daughter, Katarina Tegakwitha, from the fiercest of American tribes. Some idea of his labors and their success may be gleaned from the fact that the twenty-five churches which he found in his diocese in

1847 had increased in 1861 to one hundred and seventeen, and the two parish schools to twenty-seven.[1]

Five of these schools were in charge of the Sisters of St. Joseph, who found in Bishop McCloskey during his episcopate a staunch supporter and a loyal friend. In contrast to many of their western experiences, the Sisters in nearly every instance in the East, entered well established parishes with large congregations and comfortably built schools. In many of these, classes for boys and girls under lay supervision were in operation before the arrival of the Sisters, who thus began the superstructure of Catholic education on foundations already well laid. Children flocked to these schools in hundreds, and sodalities, Sunday-schools and circulating libraries soon became flourishing institutions.

St. Mary's, in Oswego, was a parish organized by French Canadians, whose church, begun in 1848, was consecrated by Bishop McCloskey in 1850. Irish and American families came in large numbers into the parish, which soon had a dual congregation, the French members having their own separate hours for services on Sundays. A school was commenced in the basement of the church, and conducted by two English speaking teachers, the Misses Halligan and Gilmour. In 1858, the pastor, Reverend Joseph Guerdet, secured a building for a parochial school, and at his request, six Sisters were sent from Carondelet, with Sister Stanislaus Saul as Superior. The other members of this first community were Sisters Chrysostom McCann, Patricia Pyne, Hyacinthe Blanc, Flavia Waldron, and Eusebius Verdin. Flourishing at first, then passing through varying periods of struggle and discouragement due to changing conditions in city and parish, the school maintained a continuous existence from the beginning to its present prosperous state. In 1905, the first building, after forty-seven years of service, was demolished to give place to another on the same site, Sisters and children in the meantime assembling in the old church where

[1] SHEA, *op. cit.*, p. 481.

classes were conducted for one year under difficulties cheerfully borne by all in view of the future's great promise. The new St. Mary's was blessed on the first Sunday of September 1906 by Right Reverend Bishop Ludden of Syracuse, to which diocese Oswego then belonged. Eight teachers had been added to the original staff of six, and the average enrollment was six hundred pupils.

In July, 1860, the second mission of the Congregation in eastern New York was established at Cohoes on the invitation of Reverend Thomas Keveny. The community consisted of six Sisters, Sister Philomene Billex, Sister Flavia Waldron, Dominic Fink, Mary de Sales Morrissey, Prudentia O'Reilly, and Mary Charles Brennan. The first two were accompanied to Cohoes by Mother Saint John Facemaz, then on her way to Rome, as stated in a preceding chapter. They reached their destination on July 17, and were followed in ten days by the remaining four. Five hundred children enrolled in the school, which was opened in October under the patronage of St. Bernard. Cohoes was in the center of a milling district, and many of the young people were employed in factories. For these, evening classes were conducted by the Sisters at the convent. A circulating library was established and sodalities of the Blessed Virgin, the Holy Angels and the Infant Jesus were organized, each with its distinctive badge and banner.

On November 11, 1860, less than two months after the opening of school, Sister Philomene died, and was replaced by Sister Angela Hanner, sent from St. Louis, where she had been for ten years in charge of St. Vincent's Orphanage. In the fall of 1861, a select school numbering forty young ladies was commenced at the convent. A class of four hundred children was confirmed in 1862 by Bishop McCloskey, who met the children of St. Bernard's a second time in his own city. During a severe snow storm in the following winter, Father Keveny, justly proud of his fine school, took the pupils to Albany on what was long remembered as the "mammoth sleigh-ride." Fifty carryalls

on runners were filled with happy children; and accompanied by pastor and teachers, the long train started for the episcopal city, where it was reviewed at the cathedral by Bishop McCloskey and his Vicar-General, Father Wadhams. The party was then entertained at the Cathedral school. Sisters Mary John Cary, Maria Joseph Hurley, Clara Denihan and Celestine Degnan, were among the teachers who contributed to the future success of St. Bernard's School, which was chartered in 1890 as an Academy by the University of the State of New York.

In September, 1861, four schools were opened in the diocese of Albany, for which sixteen Sisters were sent from Carondelet, leaving there on August 28. Seven of this number were destined for Troy, the others for Albany and Syracuse. At Syracuse, Salina as it was then called, where the Sisters were invited by the pastor of St. John the Baptist's parish, Reverend Michael Hackett, the small community arrived on the morning of September 3, the day on which that zealous priest, described by those who knew him as concentrating in himself "all that contributes to make a perfect man," [2] was being borne to his last resting place, his unexpected death having occurred a few days before. Under his successor, Reverend Maurice Sheehan, the Sisters began their mission in Salina, its material success depending for a long time on the fluctuating fortunes of the great salt works in which the working population was engaged. Its most flourishing period was in 1887, when the school numbered five hundred pupils, and the institution was chartered under the Regents of New York. Its high school department was later abandoned, and the average attendance since has been three hundred and thirty in the elementary grades with seven teachers.

Sister Francis Xavier Husey was Superior of the community which, on the invitation of Bishop McCloskey, took up its temporary residence in September, 1861, in an old brick building

[2] *History of the Diocese of Syracuse,* edited by W.P.H. HEWITT, p. 9. Syracuse, New York, 1911.

on Eagle Street in Albany. With Sister Ephraim Wade, she took charge in two upper rooms of the small Cathedral School, of the girls and little boys between the ages of six and ten years; and the Christian Brothers taught the large boys. The total enrollment was two hundred pupils; and the registry of that time contains the names of boys and girls who later distinguished themselves in the social, business and professional life of Albany. The first girl registered was Mary Lawlor, who afterwards entered the novitiate in Troy, and was known as Sister Lucina. In 1866, the Sisters moved into a new convent on Elm Street. With them resided the two Sister teachers of the German school in Holy Cross Parish, also commenced in 1861 with a large enrollment. In response to a demand for a girls' select school, at that time the equivalent of the day academy, additional property was purchased on Elm Street in 1872, and a building erected by a popular subscription, the Rector of the Cathedral, Reverend Patrick Ludden, heading the list with five hundred dollars. This school was opened in 1874 with one hundred girls.

In the meantime, the Congregation had made great strides in Troy, and had spread to other parts of the diocese. When, in April 1861, Father Joseph Loyzance, of the Society of Jesus, requested of Reverend Mother Saint John teachers for St. Joseph's parish in Troy, he held out many inducements. The congregation there was very large, and its numerous children as yet unprovided with other means of obtaining an education than that afforded by a neighboring free school under Protestant auspices.[3] The Jesuits, having come to Troy with the intention of opening a college there, had a large building erected for that purpose capable of accommodating more than four hundred pupils. Here, in September, 1861, the parish school was organized, the Sisters' residence near by being a two story brick house of the plainest New England type. The school was crowded in a short time, and the basement of the church was pressed into service for additional class rooms.

[3] *Letter* of *Father Loyzance* to *Mother Saint John*, April 3, 1861.

Shortly after its opening, the convent in St. Joseph's parish, Troy, was selected for the novitiate and provincial house of the eastern province of the Congregation, and Mother Agatha Guthrie was appointed Provincial Superior. After an Act of Incorporation by the New York Legislature, secured in 1863 by Reverend Mother Saint John on the advice of Bishop McCloskey, a piece of property was secured at the head of Jackson Street. On this stood a frame house into which the Sisters moved in 1864; and here on December 8 of that year, the first postulant received into the Troy novitiate, Ellen Sheehan of Balltown, New York, was given the habit and the name of Sister Alice. The novitiate, under Sister Basil Morris as mistress of novices, grew slowly at first, and several years elapsed before it attained numerical strength sufficient to supply the demands made in the East for Sisters.

In 1862, Binghamton and Saratoga Springs, both ideal as to location and surroundings, were provided with Sisters sent from Carondelet on the requests of their respective pastors, Reverend Fathers Hourigan and Cull. A boarding and day academy for girls was commenced in the former place, and a parochial school for boys; and two hundred pupils were enrolled in a day school in the latter. In September 1864, seven Sisters, with Sister Theodora McCormack as Superior, took charge of St. Peter's school in Troy. This was already well organized under four lay teachers in one of the largest parishes in the diocese, of which the pastor was Reverend James Keveny. The latter had consulted with Bishop McCloskey on the subject of his school, and found the Bishop "well pleased with my preference for the Sisters of St. Joseph." [4] In addition to the parish school, which numbered four hundred children, a select school for girls was organized as in several of the other parishes. The last community sent from Carondelet to the eastern province came in 1869 to Lansingburg, where Reverend Thomas Galberry, an

[4] *Letter* of *Reverend James Keveny* to *Mother Saint John,* January 23, 1862.

Augustinian, a future Bishop of Hartford, organized his school under the title of St. Augustine's Free Institute.

In the meantime, the beloved Bishop McCloskey, raised to the Archbishopric of New York in 1865, was replaced by Bishop Conroy. With the sanction of the latter, a new provincial house was begun in Troy, and brought to completion by Mother Assisium Shockley, at that time Provincial Superior. To procure the funds needed for so great an undertaking as this was in a small eastern town in the middle sixties took courage and great trust in Providence, both of which were possessed by Mother Assisium. She was the descendant on her father's side of an old colonial family of Delaware. Her maternal ancestors were Quakers, who had emigrated from Pennsylvania to Baltimore after the Revolutionary War, and had thence removed to a new settlement at Guernsey, Ohio. Here her mother, grown to young womanhood, was converted to the Catholic faith by the Dominican missionary, Father Fenwick, who, with his nephew, Father Dominic Young, was giving missions in that part of Ohio.

The family was very large, and noted for longevity, two of its members attaining to the age of one hundred years. The first conversion was followed in the course of time by the entrance into the true fold of relatives to the number of fifty. Mother Assissium was one of eleven children, and was born at Lancaster, Ohio in 1831. She received part of her early training in Cincinnati, where she also joined the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception conducted by the Sisters of Notre Dame. This devotion she promoted during her whole religious life, which began with her reception of the habit in Carondelet on March 19, 1857. In the academy, where she was assigned as teacher after her profession, she was instrumental in organizing the Sodality, which received its diploma of aggregation in 1865 over the signature of the distinguished Jesuit General, Very Reverend Peter Beckx.

When she undertook to build in Troy, she confidently invoked the aid of St. Joseph, promising that his statue should adorn

the front of the new convent when finished. Many doubted that the statue could be erected without a hostile demonstration, as a small remnant of the old Know-Nothing Party was accustomed each year to build bonfires on the frozen Hudson and burn St. Patrick in effigy there. The building was completed and the statue placed in position with imposing ceremonies, Reverend Clarence Walworth, a well-known Redemptorist of Albany, delivering an eloquent address to the assembled Trojans. An old resident of the parish, visited on his death-bed the following day by the Sisters, lifted emaciated hands in thanksgiving that he had lived to see the day when the saints of God could be publicly honored without fear of molestation from their enemies.

In addition to the parish school, which soon secured new and larger quarters, a private academy for girls was inaugurated successfully at the convent in 1868. This, however, with similar private, or select, schools at Albany, Cohoes, and St. Peter's in Troy, gave place in 1883 to the larger interests of the parish schools, which were yearly growing in numbers and importance, and which from that time became almost the sole work of the Sisters in the Albany diocese. St. Lawrence's in Troy began with a large attendance in 1874. In the same year, the historic old town of Hudson, and in 1875, Schenectady, of Indian-massacre fame, opened their schools, St. Mary's and St. Joseph's respectively, to Sisters from the Provincial House in Troy. In Schenectady, where the pastor was a converted Hebrew, learned and pious, but, singular to relate, with little or no financial ability, the second German school in the province was commenced and flourished in spite of many discouraging circumstances. In 1876, St. Michael's in Troy began its prosperous career in the basement of the church built in that parish by the Jesuit Fathers. The classes were soon crowded out of those quarters and transferred to what was then a very imposing brick school completed by the Jesuits just before their departure from the parish. Their work was carried on by members of the diocesan clergy, the

first of whom was Father James Flood. Sister Annunciation O'Brien was the first Sister in charge of St. Michael's School, which fostered numerous vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, and claimed among its past pupils as the years went on, many men and women remarkable for loyalty to church and state.

Belonging to the Troy Province in the spring of 1875 were one hundred and seven Sisters, having in their care four thousand eight hundred and eleven pupils. Mother Gonzaga as Provincial Superior had succeeded Mother Assissium, recalled to Carondelet in May 1869; and from 1877 to 1882, Mother Teresa Louise Crowley, an enthusiastic teacher and student, directed the affairs of the province. During this term, in 1879, was established the first charitable institution under the Congregation in the East, St. Mary's Home in Binghamton, supported at first by voluntary contribution, but later by state aid.

The growth of Catholic and religious sentiment in Troy was illustrated in a demonstration on May 22, 1879, such as is rarely witnessed, and of which the convent was the center. On that date there was placed in the chapel of the novitiate the body of the Martyr, St. Theodora, brought from Rome by Reverend Mother Agatha in 1877 and given to the Provincial House in Troy. For nine days beginning on May 13, it was exposed in the Sanctuary of St. Joseph's Church in Troy; and a public novena made in honor of the saint was participated in by thousands. Of the solemn ceremony attending the translation of the relics to the convent chapel on May 22, the *Troy Press* of the following day, characterizing it as an impressive contradiction of the "idea so prevalent in our day that we have outlived the ages of faith," gave a glowing account, which reads in part:

At four o'clock yesterday afternoon, the block in front of St. Joseph's Church was filled with people, and within the portals of the church standing room could not be obtained. The altars were ablaze with lights and redolent with the fragrance of beautiful flowers. The sanctuary was filled with priests, and among them,

in full pontificals, sat the Right Reverend Bishop McNierney, and the chancellor of the diocese, Father Collins of Albany. In the pews to right and left could be seen the white cornettes of the Sisters of Charity and the black veils of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the white dresses of the Young Ladies' Sodality and the blue badges of the Young Men's. From the pulpit where he stood, the clear tones of Reverend Father Mooney's voice filled the church. With an eloquence born of fervor and sincerity, he spoke of the catacombs of Rome, of the sufferings of the primitive Church, of those days of eighteen hnudred years ago when the faithful gathered in dark chapels in the bowels of the earth to listen to the teachings of a Peter or a Paul; when Popes administered the Sacraments to candidates for martyrdom; when the Church was in her infancy, yet strong and enduring as she is today.

The sermon concluded, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given; and then followed a scene which must have recalled to the minds of the beholders all that they had read or dreamed of early Christian times. Through the opened ranks of the various societies, the shrine containing the relics was borne accompanied by the Bishop, priests,[5] acolytes, and Sisters, bearing lighted candles. The Litany of the Saints was chanted as the procession moved slowly through the reverent crowds that lined the streets leading to the convent, "and its refrain floated out through the open windows long after the last glimmering taper in the line had passed from sight."[6] The eager public was later admitted to the chapel, where "flowers bloomed on every side, and peace and beauty seemed to dwell alike within its hallowed walls."[7]

Ten years later, a writer in the above mentioned periodical recalled to the minds of its readers "the beautiful May mornings and evenings of that novena," when Troy welcomed the stranger

[5] The Jesuit Fathers, Loyzance, Nash, Flynn, Baxter and De Laby, and Fathers Collins, Lynch, Mooney, Swift, Connolly, Gavin, Havermans, Hannett, Ottenhues, and Drum.

[6] *Troy Press,* May 23, 1879.

[7] *Ibid.*

saint from across the sea; and he accredited much good accomplished to the intercession of the virgin martyr; for

> When the sweet story of her life became familiar, devotion spread, mothers named their little children in her honor, and taught their older ones daily to ask her prayers. That she has blessed the house wherein she dwells, who can doubt? Quietly, unobtrusively, the lives of its inmates go on, the peace of God in their hearts, His praises on their lips, and His blessing upon their work.[8]

The schools continued to advance in numbers and efficiency, and on all sides the Sisters won friends and patronage. In August 1881, at the request of Reverend John P. McIncrow of Amsterdam, New York, six Sisters were sent to his school, which had been in operation for several years under secular teachers. Sister Genevieve Horine, as Superior, with Sisters Columbine Ryan, M. Sacred Heart Dwyer, Stanislaus Vedder, Adelaide Melendez and Alice Sheehan, formed the first community of St. Mary's Institute, as the school was called. As such it was chartered under the Regents of the University of New York, setting in this respect a precedent which was followed by all the schools of the province. Its first academic graduates, bearing the Regent's diplomas, were sent out in 1885. In 1886, Sister Marcella Manifold was appointed Superior, and remained in charge of St. Mary's for nineteen years. A deep and untiring student, capable of sustained effort, strongly individual and with a just estimate of values in character and achievement, Sister Marcella infused her own spirit of enthusiasm into pupils and fellow teachers, and left nothing undone to continue and expand the good work begun by her predecessors.

In the short space of three years, Mother Mary James Mernaugh, Provincial Superior from 1882 to 1885, won the love and confidence of all by her rare gifts and her eagerness in contributing by every means in her power to the happiness of others. She was in her thirtieth year when placed in the re-

[8] *Troy Press*, Aug. 10, 1889.

sponsible position as Superior of a province, and her energy, piety and talents gave rich promise for the future; but her rapidly failing health in the spring of 1885 was the occasion of her recall to the Mother House in Carondelet, where on June 19 her lamented death occurred. Brief as was her régime in the East, several important missions were inaugurated under her auspices. Six Sisters were sent on January 22, 1883 to Glens Falls, which they reached in the midst of a blinding snowstorm; but the warm welcome they received was in strong contrast to their rough treatment by the elements. On the feast of St. Francis de Sales, a week later, they took charge of the boys and girls of St. Mary's parish. The phenomenal development of the school in both grammar and high school departments made other buildings necessary; and as the number of children increased, the Church itself became too small to hold them and their elders. A church building near by belonging to a Methodist congregation was secured by the resourceful pastor of St. Mary's, Father Curtain, and converted into both auditorium and chapel. For thirty years, Sister Florentine Daly, a woman of exceptional ability was principal of St. Mary's, contributing to the enviable position which it attained as the largest parochial school in the Albany diocese.

In August 1883, Mother Mary James accompanied Sister Maria Joseph Hurley and her community of six teachers to Syracuse, where, on the invitation of Reverend Joseph Guerdet, the French pastor, the same who had welcomed the Sisters to Oswego twenty-five years before on their first arrival in the diocese, they took charge of a large and splendid school just erected in the parish of St. John the Evangelist. This was chosen by Bishop Ludden for the Cathedral parish three years later, when Syracuse became an episcopal see; and the school assumed new importance under the guidance of his Vicar-General, Monsignor Lynch, doubling its capacity in five years and establishing academic grades chartered under the Regents in 1891. In the same year was chartered the Watervliet Academy, also

inaugurated in 1883 with humble beginnings, and raised to a high plane of efficiency through the untiring efforts for many years of Sister Gertrude Conway.

To the wise government of Mother Mary John Carey, appointed Provincial Superior in 1885, was due the advancement of the Congregation in the East from that date until her death in 1904. Mother Mary John had received the habit at the Mother House in 1864, being then in her twentieth year. She was sent to the aid of the eastern missions, and after filling the office of Superior at St. Bernard's Academy in Cohoes from 1877 until 1882, she was sent to Troy as Assistant-Provincial, proving of invaluable assistance to Mother Mary James until the latter's removal in 1885. Mother Mary John was a zealous and humble superior, whose beautiful life was an inspiration to all who had the privilege of knowing her. Towards all who sought either material or spiritual aid from her, her great heart overflowed with charity, "its motherly instinct making her quick to detect pain of mind or body, and prompt to relieve it by every means in her power." [9] Her rare judgment, good common sense and fine executive ability won commendations from business and professional men with whom she had dealings, and by whom she was always held in high esteem.

The special object of her love and care was the novitiate. She encouraged religious vocations, and watched diligently over the training of the young members, into whose minds and hearts she ceaselessly endeavored to instill her own love of Rule and religious discipline and her zeal for promoting God's glory at any sacrifice. Naturally reserved in disposition, she disliked personal notice, which was to her a source of great mortification; but she cultivated friends for the Congregation among the clergy and also persons of the world, whose spiritual interests she was always ready to serve. Little children she loved tenderly; and mindful of their future careers, she spared no pains to further the success of the schools and the improvement of the teachers,

[9] *Necrology*, 1904.

devoting herself whole-heartedly to building up the institutions under her charge. There was no part of the wide field assigned her by obedience that did not receive her personal and practical attention; and her own many talents were made to yield each its hundred fold.

To the one benevolent institution in the province, St. Mary's Home in Binghamton, she added St. Joseph's Home in Troy and St. Mary's Hospital in Amsterdam. The former was undertaken at the request of the officials in charge of providing for the city's poor. These men, finding among Troy's many charities no place where homeless and forsaken infants were being cared for, appealed in 1872 to Mother Mary John. On an eminence south of Troy overlooking the Hudson and the surrounding country, she had secured in 1889 a farm of one hundred acres, and on this ideal location, called Glenmore, had erected Loretto Convent, a retreat for the aged and infirm Sisters of the province. A second house on the Glenmore farm, a small dwelling, was now thrown open as a temporary home for the little waifs, who were brought in such numbers that in 1895, with the assistance of interested friends, the community secured possession of the Winslow Estate, which crowned a neighboring hill. Its fine residence was remodelled, and the little ones transferred to it from Glenmore in July.

They had been scarcely five months in their new home, when, in December, 1895, it was destroyed by fire. The sympathy of the city was extended to the Sisters in their distress, and in so practical a manner that in a very short time a large and model structure rose on the ruins of the old homestead. Mother Mary John superintended the building of the new St. Joseph's Home, in which nothing was overlooked that could conduce to the health and comfort of the children. It was placed under the city Board of Charities, with the agreement that boys and girls to the age of eight years would be received, the former to be then transferred to the Christian Brothers, the latter to the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul.

St. Mary's Hospital in Amsterdam, the only one in that city under Catholic auspices, established in 1903 through the efforts of Reverend Father Browne, pastor of St. Mary's parish, was supplied by Mother Mary John with an efficient staff of nurses in charge of Sister Mathilda Donovan, whose great charity for the sick and suffering eminently fitted her for the direction of this work. It had been in successful operation for six years, when Right Reverend Bishop Burke of Albany urged on Mother Mary John the necessity of hospital work in connection with St. Joseph's Home in Troy, where extensive additions were being made. His request was complied with, the new institution, incorporated under its own special board of directors, serving also as a practical training school for nurses.

Large schools were commenced at St. Patrick's, Troy, in 1889; Little Falls in 1890; Hoosick Falls in 1891; and in 1893 at Syracuse, where St. Lucy's Academy soon increased its original staff of six teachers to twenty-two. Saratoga Springs, which had maintained a school from 1862 to 1882 and then discontinued it owing to various adverse circumstances, received a community of Sisters again in 1900, Mother Mary John accompanying the band to their destination in St. Peter's parish and leaving Sister Clara Denihan in charge.

These, with other schools of the province, following the example of St. Mary's Institute in Amsterdam, the first to secure the incorporation of its high school under the State Board, were chartered as academies by the Regents of New York University. The Cathedral School in Albany, incorporated in 1892, grew to enormous proportions under the direction for twenty-four years of Sister Rose Aurelia Higgins, frail and delicate in body, but tireless in energy, and attained an enviable reputation for efficiency; while St. Joseph's Academy in Troy, its charter dating from 1896, ranks as one of the largest in the Albany diocese, registering over one thousand pupils with twenty-two teachers. On the departure of the Christian Brothers from Troy in 1901, their classes were taken over by the Sisters, and commercial

courses inaugurated, fitting many for successful business life.

For nineteen years Mother Mary John was the central force in all these activities. The province developed under her strong guiding hand and the influence of her generous heart. Gifted with great discernment, she was happy in the choice of Sisters for responsible positions, and able superiors aided her on all sides, faithfully carrying out her plans and encouraging her by their loyal support. Two of her councillors during a great part of this time were Sister Esperance Qualey, a woman of rare sweetness and strength of character, and Sister M. Annunciation O'Brien, who remained a member of the Provincial Council for over thirty years. In the summer of 1904, Mother Mary John was attacked by a serious illness which was a source of general anxiety. She herself, however, filled with a great desire to live and labor, struggled bravely against increasing weakness and disease, and was the last to give up hope. When convinced that death was imminent, she accepted it with heroic resignation, and yielded up her strong soul on the morning of All Saints' Day.

Her successor, Mother Odilia Bogan, was a woman of charming personality, whose sweet disposition and kind heart drew others irresistibly towards her. God's will was the strong motive power of her life, and she worked towards its accomplishment with a clearness of vision born of great faith. During her ten years' government of the province, she strove to keep alive the spirit of zealous devotion to duty infused into it by her predecessor. The physical, intellectual, and spiritual interests of Sisters and children were subjects of her continual solicitude; and to the promotion of these she bent all her endeavors, too broad in her views of life to be discouraged by any trial or difficulty. The same story of increasing numbers, added facilities, and progress towards ultimate success traced by the schools up to 1905, was repeated during her decade of office. In 1907, Sister Julia Ford was appointed provincial directress of schools, and with her wide experience both in New York and in the

Western States, aided materially in unifying the work of the teachers, and in keeping the academies up to the standard required by their charters.

The addition to the school list in 1907 of St. Francis de Sales' Academy in Utica, which increased its faculty in ten years from five to nineteen Sisters, and of St. Ann's in Albany with an enrollment in 1908 of six hundred and eleven pupils, brought the number of children under the care of the Sisters in the province in 1909 up to twelve thousand seven hundred and fifteen. There were at this time three hundred and sixty professed Sisters belonging to the Provincial House in Troy, fifty-eight of whom were located there, together with forty novices and ten postulants. The community had outgrown the old St. Joseph's Convent. A new novitiate was felt to be an imperative need. Glenmore was considered by Mother Odilia and her Council as a suitable location; but it was difficult of access. Nearer to the city and more convenient was the old ecclesiastical Seminary.

This, built in 1856 as a Methodist College under the name of Troy University, stood on a hill overlooking the city and the Hudson, its four tall spires outlined against the eastern sky. Loss of patronage followed the outbreak of the Civil War, which requisitioned many professors and students of the University; and the building, sold for debt in 1862, was bought up by Reverend Peter Havermans, acting for Archbishop Hughes of New York. It was converted by the latter into a Seminary for the ecclesiastical province of which he was the head; and as such, under the patronage of St. Joseph, it continued until the opening of Dunwoodie in 1896. It remained the property of the Archdiocese of New York, tenanted for a time by a community of Dominican nuns, left homeless by a fire that destroyed their orphanage at Sparkhill; and later used by the Italians of the diocese as a preparatory Seminary. It was sadly in need of repair, but Mother Odilia saw its possibilities as a future home for her novices; and though reckoning the cost, which she knew would be great, she determined to possess it. Discouraged at

ST. JOSEPH'S SEMINARY AND PROVINCIAL HOUSE, TROY, NEW YORK

first on account of the outlay that would be necessary to put it in good condition, she gently persisted in her purpose, feeling that the investment would be a wise one; and success crowned her efforts.

In 1908, she secured the building, but four years elapsed from the date of purchase before the repairs were completed, and the finished structure, still to be known as St. Joseph's Seminary, was dedicated with imposing ceremonies. These took place on December 11, 1912, when His Eminence, Cardinal Farley, blessed anew the building first consecrated to its holy purpose by one of his illustrious predecessors, Cardinal McCloskey, then Bishop of Albany. Bishop Burke was the assisting prelate, and a large concourse of priests assembled from all parts of the State. Many of these, as well as the Cardinal, had made their studies in the old Seminary, and the occasion and the gathering were notable. Pontifical Mass, with a choir composed of clergy, followed the dedication; and Monsignor John Walsh, the reverend speaker of the day, peopled the historic chapel in retrospect with students and professors of olden times, and noted the appropriateness of the Seminary's present use, "where instead of the priest, there will be trained the religious teacher, whose influence will awaken and guide vocations to the priesthood." He paid a graceful tribute to the Sisters of Saint Joseph, so many of whose former pupils had received ordination in the sanctuary where he now stood:

> We who spent our earlier years with them, and found our vocations nourished by the purity, beauty and devotedness of their lives, know and acknowledge their worth, and rejoice that the home of our youth has gone over into the possession of those who prove how much they prize it by the colossal sacrifices they have made to own and reconstruct it.

In the reconstruction of the Seminary, the principal features were preserved, the exterior of the main building being left unchanged except for a coating of cement stucco and the addition

of a large and attractive entrance. Two annexes at the extremities on the north and south were entirely rebuilt, increasing the length of the structure to three hundred and sixty feet. The interior, which was almost wholly renewed, consisted of spacious north, south and central pavilions, connected by intervening sections of classrooms, studies and dormitories arranged along corridors extending through the building on a north and south axis. The chapel, occupying the second and third floors of the central pavilion, was kept in its original state, care being taken to preserve the old pews, and the carved wooden altars and statues, all of Belgian workmanship.

In February following its dedication, Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul, and Bishops McGolrick of Duluth and O'Gorman of Sioux City, Iowa, were guests of the Seminary, and during their stay visited many of the institutions of Troy and Albany, expressing their great appreciation of the results accomplished by the Sisters in those places. The first ceremony of religious profession in the chapel of the Seminary took place March 26, 1913; and on April 16 following, one hundred and sixty clergymen, including many bishops and monsignori, assembled to celebrate at their old *Alma Mater* the thirteenth annual reunion of the Alumni Association of St. Joseph's Ecclesiastical Seminary. The venerable Bishop Gabriels, the rector of 1871, pontificated at the solemn High Mass, and Bishop Nilan of Hartford presided over the business meetings. The Association subscribed a generous donation for the new novitiate; and a bronze tablet, designed by Reverend Francis P. Moore of the class of 1884, and inscribed with the names of the founder, patrons and faculties from 1864 to 1896, was erected on the north wall of the foyer. At a similar gathering on May 5 of the following year, the opening Mass was celebrated by Bishop Colton of Buffalo.

Mother Odilia did not long survive the crowning achievement of her ten years' successful labors as Provincial Superior. For several years she had been a sufferer from a serious heart affec-

COLLEGE OF ST. ROSE OF LIMA, ALBANY, NEW YORK

tion, which became acute in the beginning of 1915. The opening months of this year she spent in St. Paul, where experienced physicians and skilled community nurses sought, by every scientific means known to them, to ward off a fatal disease and prolong her useful life. When hope could no longer be held out for her recovery, she was brought back by her own request to Troy. The private car of John D. Ryan of New York, brother of the Superior-General, Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga, was placed at her disposal for this last long journey, which, accompanied by her nurses and other members of the community, she made with all possible speed, to the anxious hearts awaiting her arrival in Troy. Her death occurred at the Provincial House there on April 26, 1915, in the midst of her sorrowing Sisters. Her successor was Mother Irene Tyrrell, who, as her loyal and devoted assistant during ten years, had given evidence of fine executive ability as well as of a deeply religious nature and of true spiritual vision. Mother Irene resigned after two years on account of failing health.

The number of schools was increased between 1910 and 1917 by St. Patrick's in Syracuse (1911); St. John the Baptist's, Troy, (1912); Sts. Cyril and Methodius for the Slavic children of Binghamton, (1912); St. Agnes Academy, Utica (1913); St Anthony's Italian School, Troy (1914); St. Peter's, Rome (1915); St. Vincent de Paul's, Syracuse (1915), and St. John the Evangelist's, Oswego (1916). A new department of work was inaugurated in the Day Home at Albany in 1917. Under Mother Irene's successor, Mother Margaret Mary Collins, St. Patrick's School in Utica, St. Francis de Sales in Troy, and the College of St. Rose of Lima in Albany were begun. The College of St. Rose was established in response to the urgent requests of both the clergy and laity of the diocese. With the approval and encouragement of its Honorary President, Right Reverend Edward F. Gibbons, Bishop of Albany, the Sisters obtained a charter from the Board of Regents of the University

of New York, empowering the college to grant degrees in arts, music and science. In the third year of its existence, (1922) it enrolled fifty students in freshman, sophomore and junior classes.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CONGREGATION IN THE NORTH (1858–1922)

THERE were eighteen Sisters of St. Joseph in Minnesota in 1858. These were located in St. Paul and St. Anthony, and were conducting two academies, a hospital and two parochial schools, under the direction of Mother Seraphine Coughlin, who was closely associated with the early growth of the Congregation in the North.

On December 8, 1858, Monsignor Ravoux, Administrator of the diocese after the death of the venerable Bishop Crétin in 1857, assisted at the ceremony in the chapel of the novitiate when two postulants, Ellen Ireland and Ellen Howard, received the habit of the Congregation and the names respectively of Sister Seraphine and Sister Celestine. These young girls were the sister and the cousin of John Ireland, future Archbishop of St. Paul, whom Monsignor Ravoux at the bidding of Bishop Crétin, had accompanied a few years before to the Seminary of Meximieux in France. They had been pupils at the academy from 1852 to June 1858, when they were among its first graduates, receiving their graduation honors privately, as at that time the institution was not incorporated. They had finished the course then taught in English and French, and entered the novitiate in September, each in her seventeenth year. Monsignor Ravoux grew eloquent over the ceremony on December 8, the first time in St. Paul that two had received the habit on the same day. It was also the only occasion of the kind at which he presided.

The successor of Bishop Crétin arrived the following summer in the person of Right Reverend Thomas L. Grace, who, immediately after his consecration by Archbishop Kenrick in St. Louis on July 26, started north by the usual means of travel, the

Mississippi river steamer, and reached St. Paul on July 29. Here his arrival was awaited from early morning by the Cathedral congregation, assembled on the river bank. When the whistle was heard announcing the approach of the boat that bore the new prelate, the church bells rang out a great peal, and the entire population of the city flocked to welcome him and conduct him to his episcopal church. This, commenced by Bishop Crétin and pushed almost to completion by Monsignor Ravoux, was still unplastered. The bare walls of the interior were decorated for the occasion with branches of tamarack, and great boughs of tamarack lined each side of the central aisle, up which the Bishop was escorted to the altar for a brief address to his assembled flock.

Bishop Grace lost no time in manifesting the deep interest which he, like his predecessor, felt in the organizing of Catholic schools. To those above mentioned there had been added during the brief administration of Monsignor Ravoux a school for the children of the Assumption parish. The German congregation there had built a church, but having no school building, they were given the use of one of two small brick houses on the hospital grounds. Sister Radegonda Proff, sent from Carondelet in 1858, took charge of this one room school; and in the second house, Sister Margaret Sinsalmeyer, who accompanied her every day from the academy on Bench Street, taught a free elementary school for the girls of the Cathedral parish. The Indian school at Long Prairie was closed before the death of Bishop Crétin. The officials at the agency raised many difficulties, even refusing at times to deliver food and clothing to the children; and the Bishop was often obliged to advance the necessary means for their support.[1] On the removal of the Winnebagos to a new agency at Blue Earth in the extreme southern part of the state in 1855, the Sisters returned from Long Prairie to St. Paul. Sister Scholastica Vasques, the pioneer of this first Indian mission of the Congregation, was broken in health, and was afterwards recalled to St. Louis.

[1] Cf., CLARKE, *op. cit.*, p. 425.

Bishop Grace soon transferred the girls' free school which had outgrown its one-room abode, to the basement of the Cathedral, where both boys and girls were placed under the care of four Sisters in what was henceforth known as the Cathedral School. Seeing the crowded condition of the academy, still occupying its primitive buildings on the old church site, he arranged for a temporary exchange of houses, and the classes were transferred to the large stone hospital, the few patients from there being removed to the school, which was made suitable for their accommodation. The change of quarters proved of great advantage to the academy, and the fall term of 1859 began with increased numbers. A site for a new building was secured in 1860 on St. Anthony Hill, then just within the limits of the city, and the foundation laid the following year.

In the meantime, on the establishment of the St. Louis Generalate in 1860, the academy was made the Provincial House, and Mother Seraphine Coughlin was appointed first Provincial Superior of St. Paul. Mother Seraphine commenced the new academy and novitiate, but did not live to see its completion. For several years she had been in failing health, due to the hardships of pioneer life in the rigorous northern climate. It was partly on this account that she had resigned the office of Superior in Carondelet when elected to it by the Sisters on the death of the revered Mother Celestine Pommerel in 1857. In January 1861, she drove to the convent in St. Anthony in order to accompany back to St. Paul an invalid Sister; and during the long, cold ride, heedless of her own comfort, she bestowed all her care on her suffering companion. A severe cold which she then contracted brought on a lingering and painful illness, which resulted fatally on August 1, 1861.

The Sisters of the St. Paul Province sustained a heavy loss in the death of their beloved Superior, taken from them in her thirty-fifth year. For eight years she had labored untiringly, giving herself with zeal and energy to her numerous duties in the promotion of both charity and education. To her share had

fallen many of the wearying experiences and the discouragements of early days; but while her bodily strength remained, her spirit kept up unbroken, for she belonged to that period of which Archbishop Ireland writes:

> In the Diocese of St. Paul, those days of long ago were pre-eminently days of boundless zeal, of ardent faith, of unstinted charity, of holiest simplicity, of deepest consecration to the service of religion. The first Bishop of St. Paul was the high exemplar and leader of all; the missionaries who stood by him did not fall much below his stature; the sheep whom they shepherded partook of their spirit. Into such a community came the Sisters of St. Joseph, ready, by reason of their exalted souls, to breathe its atmosphere and enrich it with the perfume of their consecrated womanhood.[2]

Mother Seraphine's successor was Mother Stanislaus Saul, who had been for three years Superior in Oswego, New York, and who did not arrive in St. Paul until April 1862, Sister Helena Coerver administering the affairs of the province in the interval. In the novitiate during this period were Sisters Agnes Veronica Williams, Aloysia Shelley, Mary Pius Sexton, Columba Auge, and Aurelia Bracken, and to these were soon added Sisters Josephine Gleason, Scholastica Duggan, and Mary Austin Egan. Apart from increasing numbers, an encouraging feature of the novitiate was the reception into it of the Sisters' own pupils, nearly all of the above being former students of the academies in St. Paul and St. Anthony.

At the former when the new Provincial arrived were forty day pupils and fifteen boarders, including two daughters of a Sioux chieftain, Hole-in-the-Day, who were the cause of much anxiety to teachers and pupils during the Sioux uprising in 1862. They were visited at intervals by their brother, Ignace, a pupil of the Benedictines, who adopted the manner of life which he deemed suitable to a royal prince, driving to the convent in a coach be-

[2] ARCHBISHOP IRELAND, *Our Consecrated Sisterhoods*, p. 7. St. Paul, 1902.

hind high-stepping horses. He was afterwards assassinated by members of his tribe, who resented his advanced ideas. Typical of the old and new order of civilization in the North were these two girls. Isabel, the younger, spirited and impulsive, was with much difficulty persuaded on her entrance into school to part with the small and shining bowie knife which she had been accustomed to carry about with her, a treasured but dangerous toy. Her elder sister, resembling in piety and gentleness another Indian maiden, the Lily of the Mohawks, became an apostle of the Faith among her people, loved and reverenced by them.

In the progress of the pupils Bishop Grace took a lively interest, conducting the oral examinations quarterly in the presence of parents and friends assembled in the study hall, and distributing the honors at the annual closing exercises on the lawn. In July 1863, the central wing of the new academy was completed. Built of yellow limestone, and three and a half stories in height, it presented an imposing appearance to the residents of St. Paul at that time. Sunny parlors flanked the entrance hall, which led to the library and music room combined, and from which the stairway ran to chapel and class rooms on the second floor and dormitories on the third. The convent was later enlarged by successive additions, extensive wings being built at the sides and full fourth story in the center; but in the fall of 1863, it was amply sufficient for both novitiate and academy. The latter was conducted for the next few years almost exclusively as a boarding school, the location being considered too far out of the city for day pupils to attend.

In 1866, two Sisters were sent from the academy to establish, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, the first Catholic school in Minneapolis, at that time distinguished from St. Anthony Falls, now East Minneapolis; and in the following year, at the request of Father Genis, three Sisters took charge of the district school at Mendota, occupying the old home of Minnesota's first Governor, General Warren Hastings Sibley. This eventually gave place to a parish school, from which, as it was indif-

ferently supported, the Sisters were withdrawn in 1879. The incorporation of an orphanage for girls in St. Paul in 1869, and of another for boys at Minneapolis in 1878; the opening of the Guardian Angels School, Hastings, Minnesota, in 1872, of St. Michael's Convent, Stillwater, in 1873, and of Holy Angels' Academy in St. Paul in 1877, attest the growing strength of the province under the successive Provincial Superiors, Mother George Bradley[3] from 1865 to 1868; Mother Antoinette Ogg from 1868 to 1870; Mother Mechtida Littenecker, who served in that capacity for two terms, from 1870 to 1876; and Mother Agnes Veronica Williams, whose administration was limited to the period between 1876 and 1879.

The Provincial Superior from 1879 to 1882 was Mother Jane Frances Bochet. She was a native of France, where she received the habit of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1861. Coming to Carondelet in 1866, she was sent a few years later to St. Paul, and there filled successively the office of mistress of novices, Superior at St. Anthony's Convent, and at St. Joseph's Hospital in St. Paul. With large hearted generosity she united shrewd financial ability and a capacity for doing great things in an unobtrusive way. She won the love of the Sisters everywhere and left no means unprovided for training the teachers and young Sisters. Sister Ignatius Loyola Cox was appointed directress of studies in the novitiate, where the course embraced Christian Doctrine, reading, grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, natural philosophy, astronomy, elocution, writing, drawing and music. Sister Celestine Howard, as supervisor of schools in the province, presided over the annual summer institutes for teachers and novices, and pressed into service the best community talent to supplement the efforts of specially trained teachers and lecturers from outside. Among the latter was Professor Primm, director of music for many years in the public schools of St. Paul.

In 1882, Mother Jane Frances was succeeded by Mother

[3] Mother George Bradley left the Carondelet Congregation in 1868, and formed a diocesan Community, whose Mother House is located in Cleveland, Ohio.

Seraphine Ireland. A short time after her profession of vows in 1860, young Sister Seraphine was called to the Mother House in Carondelet, where from 1863 to 1868 she was a member of the faculty of St. Joseph's Academy. Here in 1863, after the siege of Vicksburg, came on a brief and memorable visit the chaplain of the Fifth Minnesota Infantry, Father John Ireland, tall, gaunt, and wasted with fever, on his way to the more genial climate of his northern home; and on his request in 1868, Sister Seraphine was sent by Reverend Mother Saint John to the academy in St. Paul. At the time of her appointment to the provincialship, she was the beloved Superior of the Girls' Orphan Asylum in that city. Here the children had found in her a mother than whom their own could not be more tender; and the Sisters, a leader who set before them a constant example of the most attractive and imitable virtues.

A prayerful woman of deep faith, an optimist whose enthusiastic endeavors could transmute dreams and theories into practical and shining realities, Mother Seraphine possessed many of the characteristic traits of her distinguished brother, who, made Bishop of St. Paul in 1884 and its Archbishop in 1888, was, until his death in 1918, her helper and adviser, the kindest of fathers to the Sisters of her province, their sympathetic friend, and the active coöperator in all their undertakings. In brother and sister were predominant the same vigorous personality, simplicity of life and manner combined with far-visioned intellect and resolute will, the "warm friendliness of the Irish heart that could be all to all," [4] and the same noble striving to attain a lofty ideal. For nearly four decades, Mother Seraphine, as Provincial Superior, bent all her great energies towards guiding into ever-widening channels the currents of intellectual and spiritual activity set in motion by her predecessors in St. Paul.

Shortly after the arrival of the first Sisters in Minnesota in 1851, they were honored by a passing visit from the Dominican missionary of the North, Father Mazzuchelli, who welcomed

[4] Carr, *op. cit.*, p. 975.

them to the new field in which they were the pioneers. Stepping to the door of their humble abode and extending his arms, he called the attention of the Sisters to the great and beautiful country awaiting the results of their good work, and bade them show the world their fervor, capacity, and zeal for God's glory.[5] Their successors heard a similar strain in the burden of advice always given by Archbishop Ireland to the Sisters in St. Paul, and eloquently expressed by him on the fiftieth anniversary of their foundation in that city:

> With the love of Christ abiding in you and urging you, dare to rise ever higher than the world around you could rise; surpass it in all the achievements that it honors and compel it in the name of its own ideals to acknowledge that earth is made more beautiful, that its power for good and great things is increased when the workers are inspired and guided by religion.[6]

It was in pursuance of such an ideal that Mother Seraphine trained and directed her Sisters, procured for them the best advantages in secular knowledge and helped them to build up schools, hospitals and orphanages to the highest point of efficiency. When she was appointed Provincial Superior in 1882, there were eight houses of the Congregation in the northern province, and depending on them for teachers were also ten parochial schools, five of which were in St. Paul: the Assumption, St. Louis (French), St. Mary's, and St. James'. The teachers for these resided at the academy, and were driven to their respective destinations daily in the convent bus by John Delaney, from boyhood to old age the faithful retainer of St. Joseph's; but the distances to be covered were great, and as the number of schools continued to increase, the need was felt of a home more conveniently placed for the teachers.

This was secured in 1884, when a small frame residence near St. Joseph's Hospital was rented for the purpose. To help finance the undertaking, classes in music and embroidery were

[5] *Diary* of SISTER FRANCIS JOSEPH IVORY, p. 7. (MS.)

[6] IRELAND, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

ST. JOSEPH'S NOVITIATE AND PROVINCIAL HOUSE, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

organized. Sister Celestine Howard was appointed Superior, and owing to the zeal and skillful management of this admirable woman, the small community was able in 1885 to buy a permanent home centrally located on Exchange and Cedar Streets. Here for two years a Kindergarten was conducted in addition to the music and art classes. All of these proved popular, and the building was enlarged to meet rapidly growing needs. This marked the unpretentious beginning of St. Agatha's Conservatory, one of the foremost and best known institutions of its kind in the Northwest. New housing facilities were again and again required as the classes increased in numbers and St. Agatha's activities expanded, the last of the buildings being a seven story main structure erected in 1909. An enrollment of five hundred students in 1910 was doubled in the succeeding decade, and at present exceeds eleven hundred, attesting the popularity of the courses and the thoroughness of the instruction given. Teachers trained in Florence, Rome and Munich, as well as in the best schools of the United States, contributed to make St. Agatha's an ideal home of true Christian art; and Sister Celestine, as Superior of the institution until her death in 1915, gave inspiration to the work which she had inaugurated.

A lover of art, Sister Celestine was eminently fitted to be its patron and promoter by reason of her fine appreciation, and a keen critical judgment developed through years of patient and persevering study of the masters. It was as community supervisor of parish schools, however, that her greatest influence was exercised, and she "accomplished much for the welfare of the Church in behalf of Catholic education." [7] She infused her own progressive spirit and her devotion to the interests of religion into her Sisters, and impressed upon all the dignity and importance of their profession as moulders of the hearts and characters of little children. Her own preference, as a most successful teacher, was for Christian Doctrine; and in frequent glowing

[7] Obituary notice of Sister Celestine Howard in *Acta and Dicta* vol. IV, part I, p. 176.

discourses to the teachers, she stressed the necessity of imparting in a thorough and attractive manner this best and highest of the sciences. The conducting of Catechism classes in newly formed parishes became a noteworthy feature of the Sisters' work; and as schools increased in number, the teachers from St. John's, St. Patrick's, the Blessed Sacrament, and St. Peter's were added to those already domiciled at St. Agatha's. Other parochial schools taken by the Sisters were St. Mark's and St. Vincent's, attended from St. Joseph's Academy, St. Luke's and St. Michael's, the last named dating from 1888.

In the meantime, many of the out-lying districts were opening up institutions under the care of the Sisters from St. Paul, and centers were established in other dioceses of Minnesota, and in North and South Dakota. In 1885, St. Mary's Academy at Graceville, Minnesota, was inaugurated, St. Joseph's at Waverly in 1886, St. Mary's Hospital in Minneapolis in 1887, and St. John's in Winona in 1888. This, undertaken at the request of the Bishop when the newly erected building was given up by its original owners on account of financial difficulties, was retained until 1894. At Graceville, which came into existence as a part of Archbishop Ireland's colonization scheme in Minnesota, in addition to the academy, the Sisters taught for ten years the Indian girls from a reservation in South Dakota, receiving them under a government contract which held in force until the breaking up of the contract schools in 1896. The establishment of St. John's Academy at Jamestown, North Dakota, in 1890 was followed by the opening of boarding and day schools at Anoka in 1904, Bird Island in 1897, Marshall and Avoca in 1900, Fulda in 1901, Le Sueur and Ghent in 1902, all in Minnesota, and all except those in Ghent and Avoca of academy grade, with flourishing high-school departments.

St. John's Academy, Jamestown, the first mission of the province outside of Minnesota, was opened at the request of Right Reverend Bishop Shanley, by whom was blessed the first building on December 8, 1890, and two succeeding ones built

in 1899 and 1907 to meet new conditions, St. John's having developed under the direction of Sister M. Irenaeus Egan, Superior from 1892 to 1910, into one of the largest private institutions in the North. Its efficiency was recognized by the business men of Jamestown, who donated Academy Park in 1906, and by John Reilly, a private citizen of Gladstone, North Dakota, whose gift of three hundred and twenty acres of improved land is the prospective site of a new St. John's. At Bishop Shanley's invitation, also, six Sisters—trained nurses—took charge in April 1900 of St. John's Hospital in a healthful and beautiful location of Fargo, North Dakota. Begun on a small scale, the hospital grew rapidly, and in three years new and larger quarters were required. Equipped to meet every demand of modern surgery and medicine, St. John's increased its executive staff to twenty Sisters, caring for an average of fifteen hundred patients yearly and directing a training school of fifty nurses.

The erection of St. Mary's Academy at Bird Island in a rich agricultural section was an inducement to farmers to secure land in neighboring districts, and proved to be an influential factor in the upbuilding of the place. The first request for an academy at Marshall, Minnesota, came to Mother Seraphine from the non-Catholic business men of that city, who, through the Mayor, Virgil B. Seward, a capable attorney, expressed themselves as fully aware of the "usefulness of your great society to our state," [8] and "very anxious to secure the benefits to our community." [9] The seat of Lyon County, Marshall was, like Bird Island, in a fertile farming region with excellent railroad facilities. Many nationalities were represented in its population of four thousand, only a small proportion of which, however, was Catholic. All were public spirited, thrifty and progressive, and for the most part possessed of means and culture.

Twelve prominent citizens with the pastor, Monsignor Guillot, welcomed Mother Seraphine and her companion on their initial

[8] *Letter of Virgil B. Seward,* to Mother Seraphine, Apr. 10, 1879.
[9] Ibid.

visit of investigation May 30, 1899, and offered to provide facilities for both hospital and school purposes. The school proposition only was accepted; and on March 1, 1900, a small community was sent to make a beginning, property having been purchased in the meantime, from a Methodist named Mahoney, who alone among his compatriots had been opposed to Catholic interests in Marshall. Music and art classes were conducted by the Sisters until the following September, when pupils to the number of forty were regularly enrolled in the future St. Joseph's Academy. Boarders were received in 1901, and in 1902, the first high-school subjects were made a part of the curriculum. To the full academic course in 1912 was added a teachers' course leading to certificates of the first grade. As a result, many girls who had finished in the consolidated and country schools applied for admission; and Catholics from states to the south and east, attracted by these advantages, sought permanent homes in Marshall.

While the Congregation was thus extending its influence in Minnesota and the neighboring states, the academy at the Provincial House in St. Paul, adapting itself to changing requirements, maintained through succeeding years the reputation for breadth and thoroughness which it had established early in its career. Until the eighties it was devoid of many conveniences which are now necessities, but which then were luxuries in the Middle West, and within the reach only of the affluent. Wood fires, for which fuel was carried by armfuls up long flights of stairs, and water sent to upper floors by hand-worked pumps were accessories to comfort not looked upon as dearly purchased by such labor; and neither the lack of better appliances nor the strict discipline in vogue was a drawback to this oldest institution of its kind in Minnesota, to which pupils came in large numbers from the surrounding country. Daughters for the most part of prosperous northern farmers, they were clear-minded and energetic, good students, and actively interested in all that made for civic and industrial improvement. The positive element in the

character of the school is indicated by the note of color emphasized in the sombre student uniform, bright blue veils for chapel use and a dash of crimson on the dark out-door suits.

The course of study, as outlined in the *Year Book* of 1876, included besides the elementary branches taught in what were designated as primary and intermediate divisions: "Mathematics, Prose and Poetical Composition, Rhetoric, Sacred and Profane History, Astronomy, Botany, Intellectual and Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Book-keeping, French, German and Latin; Music on Piano-forte, Melodeon and Guitar; Vocal Music; Drawing and Painting in Oils, Water Colors and Pastel; Plain and Ornamental Needle-work, Tapestry, Embroidery, Hair and Lace Work, and the making of artificial Fruits and Flowers." Religious instruction at this time was given by Reverend John Shanley, future Bishop of Fargo, whose powers of story-telling in illustration of a dry text made him an interesting and popular teacher. To young Bishop Ireland, appointed coadjutor to Bishop Grace in 1875, fell the task of conducting the oral examinations so formidable in anticipation to the students, but occasions of merriment at times, when the distinguished examiner relieved the long-sustained tension of a quiz by so manipulating his questions as to force a ridiculous or incongruous answer from some eager and unsuspecting miss.

During forty-three succeeding years, this "athlete of God and of His Church" [10] manifested the keenest interest in the educational work of the Congregation in the North.

No Michel Angelo ever had vocation so noble, so blessed, as he who moulds the youthful soul,

is the manner in which he gave beautiful expression to his sentiments before the National Education Association in July, 1902;

Each pupil is the Parian marble, rough-hewn and unformed, and every word, every act of the teacher is the stroke of the chisel falling upon the animate block to reveal the glory of the angel.

[10] *Louisville Record,* Dec. 26, 1918.

Thus ever pointing the way to higher levels, he actively coöperated with the Sisters in the attainment of desired goals, and drew into sympathy with them and their ideals his own intimate and personal friends, many of whom from time to time were the honored guests of St. Joseph's Academy, each visit of theirs a delight and frequently a rare intellectual treat to both faculty and student body. Few of these occasions, numerous in the passing years and of singular brilliance in various instances, stand out with greater prominence than the welcome given in the late autumn of 1887 to His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons. "It was a wonderful event in our lives, and required the very best that we could put forth," wrote one of St. Joseph's girls many years later. Flaming banners of gold and scarlet, garlands of red oak leaves, of the Virginia creeper, of sumach and the cardinal flower, Wagnerian overtures rendered by a youthful orchestra, were but faint means of expression for the enthusiasm with which the newly created Cardinal of the Church in America was received. An impressive figure in his robes of office and attended by Bishops Ireland, Cotter and McGolrick, His Eminence addressed all in pleasing vein, and bestowed a blessing on Sisters, novices and students.

The academy numbered at this time one hundred resident pupils, and was reaching out for room. As early as 1890, in furtherance of a project for greater expansion, a suburban property was secured between St. Paul and Minneapolis for the erection of a college and academy. Here, on what came to be known as Academy Heights, the lure of the future and the pleasures of anticipation led the Sisters to construct the proposed buildings in imagination many times before the desired end was finally realized. Periods of business depression consequent upon crop failures or the ravages of some insect plague of agriculturists were reflected in diminished numbers in the class rooms and in the community's depleted income. Vexing school and national problems in the nineties occupied the attention of the Archbishop, upon whose advice and coöperation much de-

pended; and another decade passed before the long deferred plans became realities.

It was a fruitful interval, however, during which there was no abatement of the general enthusiasm for greater development. The academy under the direction successively of Sister St. Rose Mackey from 1884 to 1895, and Sister Hyacinth Werden from 1895 to 1904, gave glowing proofs of its efficiency, being recognized by the University of Minnesota in 1896 and placed on its list of accredited schools. The Sisters continued their preparation for college work by attendance at various American universities in courses leading to degrees; and two of their number, Sister Hyacinth Werden and Sister Bridget Bohan, gathered information abroad relative to higher education for women in France, Germany and Belgium. Before returning to America, they made an exhaustive study of the organization and practical working of the *St. Anna Stift,* the Catholic Sisters' College of Münster in Westphalia, finding therein encouragement and inspiration.

Plans and curricula were completed; and in 1904, Derham Hall, the first building of St. Catherine's College group, was erected through the generosity of a pioneer resident of Rosemount in Minnesota, Hugh Derham, whose daughter and ward were both members of the community in St. Paul. On January 5, 1905, the preparatory department was inaugurated by the transfer to Derham Hall of the boarders from St. Joseph's Academy. The latter, under the supervision of Sister Eugenia Maginnis from 1905 until 1919, continued with singular success as a day school, registering in 1910, three hundred and twenty-five girls, two hundred of whom were high school students. Cardinal Vannutelli, a guest at St. Joseph's on September 20 of that year, addressing the pupils in the presence of a distinguished retinue,[11] impressed on their minds the importance to

[11] Archbishops Ireland, Christie of Portland, Oregon; Bishops Lawler; Busch of Lead, South Dakota; O'Connell of San Francisco; Scannell of Omaha; Carroll of Montana; Lennihan of Great Falls, Montana; Monsignori Le Croy and Lega; Father Wilby and Count Vannutelli.

themselves and to their country of implanting deep in their lives the spirit of religion. He congratulated them on their great opportunities, "with Sisters devoted to your spiritual growth and your moral well being"; and assured them, with characteristic Italian enthusiasm, that on his return to Rome he would tell the Holy Father of his own pleasure at their cordial welcome to the representative of the Sovereign Pontiff.

At the College of St. Catherine, in the meantime, the basis of a thorough classical training was laid by an efficient staff of twelve Sisters with Sister Hyacinth Werden, a woman of ripe scholarship and with a genius for organization, as Superior. Sister Hyacinth had labored unceasingly for years in the cause of higher education, and gave to the establishment of St. Catherine's the benefit of her talent, her fine judgment and wide experience. She enlisted among her assistants distinguished lecturers and teachers from the two neighboring institutions, St. Paul's Seminary and the College of St. Thomas, among them the Reverend Doctors Heffron, future Bishop of Winona, Ryan now of the Catholic University of America, Seliskar, McGinnis and Schaefer, the last three still members of the faculty. The first courses offered were Religion, Ethics, History, Chemistry, Physics, Botany, English, Dramatic Art, German, and the Classical and Romance languages.

The classes for the first six years, a crucial period, were small and were kept with difficulty through freshmen and sophomore years. The idea of the Catholic College for women was still novel, and required time to mature, especially in the Northwest, accustomed from pioneer days to measure real values by great practical results. Confident of ultimate success, Sister Hyacinth and her undaunted faculty pursued their way through obstacles to the higher levels, encouraged at each step by the wise counsel and fatherly interest of the venerated founder of the institution, Archbishop Ireland, who with splendid optimism, his eyes on the future, visioned a greater St. Catherine's, and lavished on the young plant his fostering care and the wealth of his rich ex-

COLLEGE HALL AND ST. CATHERINE'S CHAPEL

COLLEGE OF ST. CATHERINE, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

perience. It grew and flourished in an atmosphere of hope and enthusiasm, of renewed efforts and unconquered wills. St. Catherine's offered its first fruits to Heaven, when two of the original band of six students who had registered in 1905, Adelaide Jennings and Margaret Doyle, answered the call to a higher life, and as Sister Catherine and Sister Madeleine, entered the seclusion of St. Joseph's novitiate.

In 1913, the baccalaureate degree was conferred on the first graduates, Gertrude Malloy and Marguerite McCusker. During the same year, on a portion of the one hundred acre campus, was erected on classic lines designed by Masqueray, architect of St. Paul's Cathedral, St. Joseph's Training School, to which was removed from its old quarters the novitiate normal as an affiliated institution; and in 1914, the imposing College Hall and Auditorium were completed, followed in more recent years by Cæcilian Hall, the group fully equipped to cover sixteen departments of college work, including music, art, and all the womanly accomplishments comprised by home economics. In 1916, St. Catherine's was standarized by the North Central Association of Colleges and by an examining board from the University of Minnesota. It was next placed on the accredited list of the Catholic Educational Association and the Association of American Universities, with membership in the Association of American University Women.

Sister Frances Clare Bardon, a prominent figure for years in the educational work of the Congregation in the North, a woman of gracious presence, wide attainments and practical wisdom, succeeded to the presidency of the College in 1911; and the appointment in 1914 of Sister Antonia McHugh as dean, gave St. Catherine's a leading factor in its later development. Sister Antonia, through her untiring efforts and with the support of a highly trained faculty maintained the ideal set forth by the institution from its inception, to cultivate in its students "intellectual vigor, breadth of outlook, clearcut moral convictions, and a strong religious life," and thus "to produce women whose

qualities of mind and heart will enable them to do their share of the world's work in a gracious, generous, beneficent spirit." [12]

That these aims have made a general appeal to Catholic womanhood is evidenced by the fourteen hundred and ten senior college students whose names have been inscribed in St. Catherine's register since 1911, representing besides fifteen states in the Union, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, and the Philippine Islands; and by the influence exerted through its alumnae, seventy per cent of whom are engaged in the teaching profession. The impetus given to the intellectual life of the province by this, its central institution, is reflected in the number and character of the schools and academies which were commenced after 1905,[13] and which added an aggregate of three thousand children to the large number already being taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph in the North. The establishment of St. Michael's Hospital at Grand Forks, North Dakota, in 1908 and Trinity Hospital at Jamestown in the same state in 1916, increased by two thousand four hundred and forty-three the number of patients cared for by them annually.

A casual survey only of these records is sufficient to arouse in the mind of the reader an appreciation of the tribute paid by the late Metropolitan of St. Paul to religious communities,

> the Church's choicest and most valuable agencies. Were its Sisterhoods to disappear, there would be missed from the harvest field of the Church legions of workers whose places could never be filled; there would, be missed from the pages of the Church's story feats

[12] *Bulletin of the College of St. Catherine,* pp. 1–6. St. Paul, 1922.

[13] These are, in Minneapolis, Minn.: Notre Dame de Lourdes (1906), St. Margaret's Academy (1907), Ascension, Pro-Cathedral and St. Stephen's Schools (1917); and in other parts of Minnesota: St. Mary's Academy, Morris (1910); St. Mary's Convent, White Bear (1913); St. Aloysius Convent, Olivia (1914); St. Mary's School, Le Sueur Center (1914); St. Peter's School, St. Peter (1914); in North Dakota: St. Michael's Convent and St. James' Academy, Grand Forks (1916); and in South Dakota, Immaculate Conception Academy, Watertown (1910).

and triumphs of religion and charity that have won for it the love and admiration of the ages, and have ever been among the most striking evidences of its divine life and power.[14]

[14] IRELAND, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

CHAPTER XV

PIONEERS IN ARIZONA, MISSIONS IN CALIFORNIA (1870–1922)

In 1870, seven Sisters of Saint Joseph went from Carondelet to Arizona. The subject of sending a community to this sparsely settled territory was first broached to Mother Saint John Facemaz, Superior-General, in 1868 by Bishop Lamy of Santa Fe. In June, 1867, one of his priests, Father Coudert, had made the trip from New Mexico to Carondelet to beg Sisters for Las Vegas, where he was about to build a school; and this petition Bishop Lamy seconded, asking teachers also for Tucson, then part of his diocese under the jurisdiction of his vicar, John Baptist Salpointe.

Arizona was a missionary country, of which Tucson, with three thousand inhabitants, more than half of whom were Catholics,[1] was the capital and largest city. Tucson was one of numerous settlements of the Pimería Alta, first explored by Father Eusebio Kino of the Society of Jesus, and referred to by him in his diary of November 1, 1699, as San Cosme del Tucson.[2] Like other missions of Arizona and California, it was attended by Jesuit missionaries from Mexico until the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1767. The establishment of a military post there by the Spanish government authorities of Mexico in 1781 as a protection for the Christian Indians against the attacks of roving Apaches, brought white settlers, who soon had their own church under the patronage of St. Augustine. After the de-

[1] *Letter of Bishop Lamy to Mother Saint John.* June 26, 1868.

[2] *Kino's Historical Memoir of Pimeria Alta, A Contemporary Account of the Beginnings of California, Sonora, and Arizona, by Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, S. J.* Edited by HERBERT EUGENE BOLTON, PH.D, vol. I. p. 206. Cleveland, 1919.

parture of the Jesuits, the mission was attended by Franciscan Fathers until their expulsion with the Spaniards in 1827 by the Mexican republican Government, which two years later, began the spoliation of the mission lands. Tucson was irregularly attended by priests from Sonora, Mexico, until 1859, when as American territory it was annexed to the See of Santa Fe.

Father Macheboeuf, afterwards Bishop of Denver, spent four months in Arizona as Bishop Lamy's vicar; and finding only ruins of churches in Tucson and its environs, made use of a private house given him for a place of worship by Francisco Solano Leon, a prominent citizen of the former place. After the departure of Father Macheboeuf in 1859, Fathers Donato Reghieri and two Jesuit Fathers, Mesea and Bosco, filled in the interval until August 1864, when Bishop Lamy called for volunteers among his few priests, the Arizona missions being considered dangerous on account of hostile Apaches. The two priests selected went as far as Las Cruces, but, finding no one willing to risk his life by conducting them farther, returned to Santa Fe.[3] In 1866, Father Salpointe, who had also volunteered, was appointed to go to Tucson, and in company with two priests and a young layman for a teacher, left Santa Fe January 6 under a military escort furnished by General Carleton of Fort Marcy. They reached their destination February 7.

Father Salpointe finished a church commenced by Father Donato and began the erection of a school, his lay teacher, Mr. Vincent, in the meantime conducting classes for six months at the rectory, a house consisting of one room and an alcove and furnished "with three chairs, a writing table and a pigeon-hole case for papers," the alcove serving as a store room for the rolled-up blankets that did duty at night for beds.[4] The difficulty of obtaining the lumber needed for the roofs of the two buildings, as related by Bishop Salpointe, further illustrates the

[3] Bishop salpointe, *Soldiers of the Cross,* p. 241. Banning, California, 1898.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 252.

trials of the missionary, and points to the sacrifices made by the good people of Tucson for church and school:

The lumber was prepared in the Huachuca mountains, about eighty miles from Tucson, where there is an easier access to the pine woods than at Santa Rita. But as a proof that the works of God must be tried in many different ways before success can be reached for them, there arose another trouble. The lumber was ready, but the wagons could not be easily procured to send at once for it, and the Apaches were only waiting for the departure of the workmen from their camp to burn the lumber that had been prepared. It became necessary to look for wagons, and to send them before the coming of the workmen, to move the lumber a distance of twelve or fifteen miles to Camp Wallen, where it would be put under the care of the soldiers until some good opportunity could be found to have it brought to Tucson. This opportunity was offered by the firm of Tully and Ochoa as soon as they had to carry provisions to Camp Wallen. The so long wished for material was brought to Tucson towards the end of 1868 and delivered, free of charge, where it was needed.[5]

Reverend Mother Saint John had refused the request made in 1868 by Bishop Lamy, her reason being that the existing schools required all the Sisters at her command. Father Salpointe, however, was persistent. Appointed Vicar-Apostolic of Arizona on its separation from the diocese of Santa Fe, he proceeded to France, where he was consecrated at Clermont on June 20, 1869. From Lyons, and again from Clermont, he renewed his petitions to Mother Saint John, and expressed his intention of stopping at Carondelet on his return, hoping that Sisters would be ready by that time to accompany him to Tucson. He arrived at St. Louis in the fall, but was obliged to depart without the desired community. He had secured a promise, however, from Mother Saint John, that Sisters would be sent after the annual profession of vows in March.

On April 20, 1870, a courageous band of volunteers set out

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 254.

on their long journey. The members of the band were Sister Emerentia Bonnefoy, as Superior, Sisters Ambrosia Arnichaud, Euphrasia Suchet, Monica Corrigan, Hyacinth Blanc, Maxime Croisat, and Martha Peters. They followed the route marked out for them by Bishop Salpointe, from St. Louis to San Francisco by rail—the transcontinental road to the Pacific from Omaha was just finished—thence by ocean steamer to San Diego, where he expected to meet them and conduct them overland to Tucson. They were accompanied by Mother Saint John and Sister Lucina Crooks to Omaha, entertained on the way by a young Indian violinist who was among their fellow passengers. Delayed over night at Omaha, they went to the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy, where they heard Mass on the morning of April 23, and after receiving the blessing of Bishop O'Gorman, resumed their journey.

Willingly as they had made the sacrifice, they felt keenly the parting with Mother Saint John, who with her companion, left at this point to return to Carondelet; but they found much along the route to interest them and occupy their attention. In view of snow-capped mountains that seemed to touch the sky, over deep chasms down which they dared not look, across winding rivers fed by impetuous mountain streams, they sped along until they skirted Great Salt Lake, where an attractive view of city gardens and orchards on one side contrasted with rocks and barren mountains on the other. On April 26, they reached Battle Mountain in Nevada, where the heat was oppressive; and on the following morning, "cold as a Canadian March," passed a dreary place called Cape Horn, their train rounding the edge of a sheer precipice that fell three hundred feet below them. At seven o'clock that evening they reached San Francisco, five days out from Omaha. They had made friends on the train, among them a worthy couple of San Francisco, who, when that city was reached, saw them safe on their way to the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy.

For three days they enjoyed the hospitality of Reverend

Mother Gabriel and her community, and on April 30 took passage on the ocean steamer Arizona for San Diego, which they reached on May 3 after a pleasant voyage. Here, to their dismay, there was no one to meet them, the announcement of their coming sent from Carondelet to Bishop Salpointe, as they afterwards learned, having been delayed. On May 7, they left San Diego by wagon trail for Arizona City, at the junction of the Colorado and Gila rivers, a six days' journey. "About ten o'clock, we passed a white post that marks the southwest boundary of the United States," wrote Sister Monica in her diary of that day. "We dropped a few tears at sight of it, then entered Lower California. At noon, we halted and took lunch, twelve miles from San Diego. Sister Maxime and I went in search of gold. Seeing quantities of it, we proposed getting a sack and filling it. Just think, a sack of gold!—but we soon learned by experience that 'all that glitters is not gold.' We camped about sunset, made tea and took our supper off a rock. All were cheerful."

The following day, evidently still in high spirits, they celebrated the Patronage of St. Joseph by plucking the white flowers of the yucca and bearing them in procession on foot in advance of their conveyance, picturing themselves in Egypt with their holy patron. By noon they reached a ranch and accepted the bounteous dinner kindly offered them by the owner. These solitary ranches were distributed at intervals along the trail, but afforded few conveniences beyond a cooling drink of water and the opportunity of resting in the shade of the numerous small buildings. The next few days their route lay across mountains and over desert land, and they suffered much from fatigue, from intense heat in the day time and cold at night.

For several miles, the road is up and down mountains. We were obliged to travel on foot. At the highest point it is said to be four thousand feet above the level of the sea. We were compelled to stop here to breathe. Some of the Sisters lay

down on the road side, unable to proceed any farther. Besides this terrible fatigue, we suffered still more from thirst. Before proceeding further, I shall give you a brief description of the place. We were going south. Before us lay the American Desert, forty miles long. On the right lies a great salt lake, supposed to have been a part of the ocean, which being hemmed in by mountains could not recede with the other waters. On the left, rise ugly mountains of volcanic rock and red sand. I wished Sister Euphrasia to make a sketch of this scene, but she said it was not necessary then, as she would never forget the appearance of it. Sister Maxime named it the "Abomination of Desolation."[6]

On the morning of May 13, they crossed the Colorado River, their wagon driven on to a tow-boat, which narrowly escaped being overturned when the horses took fright at the motion of the boat, drawn to the opposite shore by ropes. At Arizona City, or Yuma, the Sisters were met by Reverend Francis Jouvenceau, Vicar-General of Tucson, who was sent by the Bishop on receipt of Reverend Mother's delayed letter, to accompany them over the remainder of the journey. He came provided with fresh horses, tents, plentiful provisions, and a boy to prepare their meals, cooked in the open over fragrant pine wood fires, all of which thoughtful preparation for their comfort was very gratifying to the travel-worn Sisters. The next week was comparatively pleasant, as they traveled at night, pitching tents and resting during the heat of the day. After passing through the valley of the Pima Indians, they were met on May 24, by a detachment of United States cavalry, sent from the fort at Tucson to conduct them through a dangerous pass near Picacho Peak in which a massacre by the Apaches had recently occurred. Citizens of Tucson and miners from the neighboring regions joined the cavalcade during the day, and with much shouting and noise, intended to deceive any lurking natives as to their number, they made the pass in safety. Sister Monica thus describes this portion of their journey:

[6] *Diary of Sister Monica*, Apr. 9, 1870.

At noon we reached the station where the remainder of the escort from Tucson was awaiting us, sixty-five miles from the city. There was great rejoicing among them; but as they could speak neither French nor English, we did not understand them. At five o'clock in the afternoon, we set out again, every one in fine spirits. All passed off pleasantly until midnight. We were then approaching Picacho Peak, where the Apaches are accustomed to attack travellers. A fearful massacre had been perpetrated there only a week previous. The road winds through a narrow pass in the mountains, where the Indians conceal themselves and throw out their poisoned arrows at the passers-by. The place is literally filled with graves, sorrowful monuments of savage barbarity. Each one prepared his firearms, even good Father Francisco. The citizens pressed around our carriage. The soldiers rode about like bloodhounds in search of prey. In going through the pass, the horses began to neigh, which is a sure indication of the proximity of the savages. "The Indians! The Indians!" was echoed from every side. Whip and spur were given to the horses—we went like lightning, the men yelling all the while to frighten the natives. The novelty of the scene kept us awake. We traveled in this way until four o'clock in the morning.[7]

The entrance of the Sisters into Tucson, which was reached on the evening of May 26, was spectacular. They were met three miles outside the town by a mounted escort and a long train of citizens, estimated at three thousand, "some discharging firearms, others bearing lighted torches, all walking in order, with heads uncovered. The city was illuminated, fireworks in full play. Balls of combustible matter were thrown in the streets through which we passed. At each explosion, Sister Euphrasia made the Sign of the Cross."[8] Amid the ringing of bells, the tired travelers, worn out with the hardships of their five weeks' journey, reached the convent, where they were welcomed by the Bishop and by the women of Tucson, who, after serving a substantial repast, left them in quiet possession of their new home.

[7] *Ibid.*, May 25, 1870.
[8] *Ibid.*, May 26, 1870.

This adjoined the Cathedral of Saint Augustine and was built after the fashion of the country, with thick adobe walls, earthen floors, and roof of sage-brush and cactus interlaced on pine rafters and covered with mud. It was one story in height, and its ten large rooms opened into many courts, cool corridors and vine covered porches. A double row of trees along one side protected from sun and the frequent sand storms.

The population of Tucson was largely Mexican, and as has been said, almost entirely Catholic. Spanish was the prevailing language, and proved easy of mastery to the Sisters, the majority of whom were French. Both English and Spanish were employed in the school, which, as the Bishop had anticipated, was soon filled to overflowing with eager and docile boys and girls, and became popular with Catholics and non-Catholics alike as a boarding and day academy. Such it remained until 1885.

Several bands of Sisters had come from Carondelet in the meantime, the first of them arriving in January 1874. Negotiations begun in the fall of 1873 for the opening of a school at the old Indian mission of San Xavier del Bac under government auspices called for Bishop Salpointe's presence in Washington, D. C.; and on his way thither he stopped at the Mother House in St. Louis, representing to Reverend Mother Agatha while there the advisability of having a larger number of Sisters and more mission houses in the far West. Three Sisters accompanied him on his return journey, which was made overland by way of Denver. During a brief sojourn in that city, then a frontier town, Bishop Macheboeuf, as a former missionary in Arizona, gave the Sisters the benefit of his experiences among the Papagos in the vicinity of Tucson. Leaving Denver on December 9, our travelers were able to make only a small part of their long journey by rail. They were obliged to go by stage over Raton Pass to Trinidad in southern Colorado, thence to Tucson in the same manner by way of Las Vegas and Santa Fe. The stage was a double wagon such as was then employed in caravan traffic, the bows covered with gray blankets; and one of the

horses was discovered to be blind. A snow storm overtook the wayfarers on the afternoon of December 13. They lost the trail, but came upon a sheep ranch, where two shepherds gave up to them their own small hut. This contained two rooms, one of which was half filled with grain. In the other were warm buffalo robes and a fire, beside which they made themselves comfortable, resuming their journey the following morning in the snow.

On December 16, they reached Trinidad, receiving a welcome there from the Sisters of Charity; arrived at Las Vegas in time to spend the Christmas holidays with the Sisters of Loretto, whose guests they were again at Santa Fe. Their arrival in Tucson at the end of January after a long and wearying journey, was hailed with delight by the small community there. The school at San Xavier's had been commenced the preceding month by three of the Sisters, whose places at St. Augustine's were now filled by the new comers.

These ten Sisters were the only ones in all of Arizona; and their number was diminished on August 1, 1874, by the death of Sister Emerentia, Superior at the academy. Her demise was the climax to a life of great self sacrifice. She became a member of the community in France in 1856, and three years later volunteered for the American missions, coming with others of her community to Carondelet. Again a volunteer in 1870 for the West, she bore bravely the great fatigue of the journey and the privations of the new life, all of which eventually undermined her health. Advised by physicians to leave Arizona for a sojourn at a health resort in Mexico as the only means of prolonging her life, and urged by them and by the Bishop to do so at once, she insisted on first applying to the Superior-General in Carondelet for permission. This was dispatched immediately; but owing to the slow transmission of the message, it reached Tucson only after Sister Emerentia's edifying death.

Reverend Mother had foreseen from the first the impossibility

of direct communication with these far distant missions, and the difficulty of filling vacancies there while the inconveniences of travel were so great as to try the courage of even the most stout-hearted. In the spring of 1876, Sisters Basil Morris, M. Berchmans Hartrich, Mary Rose and Eutichiana Piccini, sent from the Mother House to reinforce the western missionaries, reached San Francisco by rail, boarded there an ocean steamer on May 6, which, after stopping at various ports on the Pacific coast, rounded Cape San Lucas into the Gulf of Lower California, and arrived at the mouth of the Colorado River on May 21. A river boat took off the passengers for Yuma, which was reached three days later. The remaining three hundred miles into southern Arizona were covered by stage, and required ten days of tedious travel over cactus-bordered roads which connected the small Mexican rancherías dotting the desert thirty or forty miles apart.[9]

To obviate the difficulty of providing Sisters in sufficient numbers for the West, Reverend Mother considered the question of a Provincial House and novitiate there, a measure strongly advocated by Bishop Salpointe as the most satisfactory means of keeping up the schools and other institutions needed in his diocese. Accordingly, after arrangements were made with the Holy See, a Provincial Superior was appointed in 1876 in the person of Mother Irene Facemaz, and steps were at once taken for the opening of a novitiate. For this purpose a beautiful location was obtained on an eminence in the foothills overlooking the city of Tucson. On the north, the Santa Catalina Range and to the south the Santa Rita Mountains, enclosing the Valley of Santa Cruz, bespoke in their names the Catholic traditions of Arizona, and kept alive the memory of the early Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries. On this site a building was soon put up of the prevailing materials, adobe

[9] From the *Diary of Sister Berchmans Hartrich,* June, 1876. The Southern Pacific Road was in operation in 1878 between San Francisco and Los Angeles, where train connection could be made for Yuma. But it was not until 1882 that the entire trip to Tucson from St. Louis could be made by train.

roofed with sage brush. It was ridiculously small and exemplified poverty in every feature; but it was dignified by the name of Mount St. Joseph, and became a home of the happiness and peace promised to those who forsake the world's goods for the "folly of the Cross."

Mother Irene remained but one year in Arizona. She was succeeded by Mother Basil Morris, who served one term of three years. It was during this time, in 1878, that a small hospital was begun in Prescott, then the seat of government in the Territory. In 1880, another was inaugurated by Bishop Salpointe, who bought sixty acres of land opposite Mount St. Joseph on the same elevation, and put up the first of the stone buildings known as St. Mary's Hospital. It was placed in care of the Sisters, but remained under diocesan management until after the arrival of Mother Gonzaga Grand, Provincial Superior from 1881 until 1890. Mother Gonzaga was widely experienced in the affairs of the Congregation. She had been closely connected with its general administration, was successively superior in many of its large houses, and had governed the Troy province for eight years. Calm and serene in manner, and remarkable for deep piety and keen spiritual insight, she had also acquired practical business methods during her long exercise of authority; and with the view of improving the hospital conditions, she negotiated with Bishop Salpointe for the purchase of building and grounds, which became the property of the Community on October 7, 1882. She then secured a desirable place for a convent near the recently erected stone cathedral; and here in 1885, she built the new St. Joseph's Academy for girls, the old one at St. Augustine's being retained as a parochial school for boys and girls. Both schools were well patronized, and for such as could not attend either, the Sisters conducted Catechism classes at St. Augustine's in English and in Spanish.

In the same year, 1885, Mother Gonzaga, advised by Bishop Bourgade, who had succeeded to the see of Tucson, commenced

at Prescott the pioneer Catholic school in that place, and closed the hospital opened there in 1878. There had proved to be little need for this hospital, which at the time of its inception, received encouragement and financial aid from John C. Frémont, appointed Military Governor of Arizona in that year, and from his estimable wife, a Missourian,[10] who had known the Sisters in St. Louis during the Civil War. One of the first Sisters stationed at this institution was Sister Berchmans Hartrich, whose death occurred there on June 14, 1879. The pathetic scene of her burial is briefly described by Elizabeth Benton Frémont, daughter of the Pathfinder:

> There were no hearses in the town, and so the top was removed from an army ambulance; and with General Wilcox and my young brother Frank representing my father as leading pallbearers, the mournful procession wended its way to the lonely graveyard over the hillside, where a rude grave was made, and loving hands covered it with wild flowers and blooming cactus.[11]

The academies in Prescott and Tucson, as the only Catholic institutions of the kind in central and southern Arizona, rose rapidly into favor and prospered. The number of novices received, however, remained too small to meet the need for teachers and was recruited from time to time from St. Louis. The healthful climate of Tucson made the convent there an asset for the Congregation at large; and not a few delicate novices received at Carondelet found strength and vigor while completing their term of probation at Mount St. Joseph. There developed few vocations in the Territory; and largely on account of its foreign aspect and primitive conditions, Arizona as a place of residence had little attraction for girls of other western states who felt the call to a religious life. These went by preference to St. Louis, and the admitting and training of novices in Tucson was discontinued indefinitely after a religious

[10] Daughter of Thomas H. Benton, Missouri's great Senator.

[11] *Recollections of Elizabeth Benton Frémont,* compiled by I. C. MARTIN, p. 161. New York, 1912.

profession in March 1890, when five Sisters, the last received at Mount St. Joseph, made their vows. The old novitiate was, at Bishop Bourgade's request, converted into a home for orphans, where a limited number of children, never exceeding twenty-five, was received and cared for by the Sisters out of their extremely limited resources until the building was destroyed by a cyclone which swept the state in 1901.

Academies were begun in the interval at San Diego and Los Angeles; a parish school at Florence, Arizona, which was short-lived; others in Oakland, Monterey and Oxnard; a deaf-mute institute in Oakland; Indian missions at Fort Yuma, San Diego (Old Town), and Banning, all in California; and at Komatke in Arizona.

At Yuma, Arizona, was the Sacred Heart School, to which the Sisters were first sent from Tucson in 1875. The first settlers of Yuma were attracted to it by the discovery of placer gold mines in the vicinity; but when these proved less lucrative than was anticipated, the seekers after wealth departed; and the permanent residents who followed devoted themselves to other pursuits. They were home makers, mostly of Spanish nationality; and their gardens, orchards and vineyards incidentally added beauty to a picturesque landscape. In February, 1891, a great flood occurred, when, after continuous heavy rains, the Gila River left its banks, sweeping away all the adobe buildings in its path, including convent, school and rectory, and destroying half the business and residence sections of the place.

The church, on slightly higher ground, was saved by the men from a nearby Federal prison, who, under the direction of officers, erected around it a protecting levee. The Sisters escaped across the Colorado River to Fort Yuma, and from the higher level there, watched with regret the submerging of the little city and the melting of the walls that held all their earthly goods. One piano, which the eager but excited rescuers seized on as the convent's most valuable asset, was carted by them in triumph across the bridge. Much distress followed the flood,

ST. MARY'S ACADEMY AND PROVINCIAL HOUSE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

which left three hundred people homeless. The Sisters did not return, though the school was later rebuilt.

The other institutions of Arizona began a remarkable development in the nineties which kept pace with the growth and prosperity of the State. In 1893, Sister Fidelia McMahon was appointed Superior of St. Mary's Hospital, which until then, consisted of the original stone building put up by Bishop Salpointe. Sister Fidelia remained twenty years in charge of the institution, and under her supervision, two large wings, the first erected in 1894, were added to the main building, more than trebling the size of the hospital. In 1900 was constructed the unique Sanatorium, a perfect rotunda, encircling an open court and graden, with all rooms opening on wide verandas. Numerous tent houses for individual patients, and Isolation Hospital and Nurses' Home completed the institution, each department of which is supervised by graduate nurses, whose three years' training is obtained at St. Mary's under an experienced staff of physicians.

St. Mary's received a temporary check to its progress when the storm of 1901 tore out the front of the main building with the exception of the entrance, over which—auspicious omen—a large statue of the Blessed Virgin remained undisturbed. The irreparable damage inflicted by the same storm on the orphan asylum proved the proverbial blessing in disguise. The children were sent to relatives or placed in private families until 1905, when they were gathered together again in the new St. Joseph's Home. This was put up on an elevated tract of forty acres two miles south of the city, given to the Sisters by Peter Lonergan, a resident of Tucson. The great main building, finely proportioned in Old Mission style, and gleaming white through groves of pepper trees and oleander, was planned for the accommodation of one hundred boys and girls. The home is supported by voluntary contribution; and the children, after receiving a complete primary and grammar school education, are placed in good homes or in lucrative positions. Its records

fail to show one child whose later career has not reflected credit on his early training at St. Joseph's.

At Prescott, in 1904, a mission building of native granite on the pine hills overlooking the city was erected under the direction of the Superior, Sister Aurelia Mary Doyle, and equipped for academic and commercial work, to replace the old academy, the first, and for many years the only secondary school in Prescott, whose alumnæ, singularly successful, were occupying positions of prominence in the social, business and educational life of the state. St. Joseph's Academy in Tucson, enlarged and transformed by numerous improvements to meet modern conditions, became also a temporary novitiate, previous to the transfer of the provincial government to Los Angeles. This was effected in 1903 with the approval of Right Reverend Bishop Conaty of the See of Monterey and Los Angeles, and of His Excellency, Diomede Falconio, Apostolic Delegate.

Nine mission houses had been established in California at that time. The first of these, to which the Sisters were sent in 1882, was at San Diego, a place of hallowed associations, inseparably connected with the history of the Church in that state. Here Junipero Serra landed with his devoted missionaries in 1769, and began the work of evangelization which gave to California its Mission Churches and its heritage of Christian faith. Near the banks of the San Diego River, on a hill overlooking the bay and the harbor, he raised a cross on July 16, and on a rude altar under the trees celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.[12] On the hill he prayed for nine momentous days that help might be sent his starving neophytes, else this first of his mission settlements must be abandoned; and from its summit, on March 19, 1770, the day before that set for his departure to more prosperous fields, he watched the arrival of the relief ship, San Antonio.[13] Six miles up the river in lovely

[12] ZEPHYRIN ENGELHARDT, O. F. M. *Missions and Missionaries of California,* vol. II, p. 19. San Francisco, 1912.

[13] FRANCISCO PALOU, *Noticias de la Nueva California.* Tomo II. p. 257. San Francisco, California. Ed. of 1874. ENGLEHARDT, *op cit.,* p. 64.

Mission Valley, he built his church and established a permanent mission;[14] and on the place of his landing, there sprang up in later years what was known as Old Town.

In 1866, Father Antonio Ubach was appointed pastor of Old Town, where a small church was built in 1850, four years after the last of the mission property was sold by Pio Pico, Mexican Governor of California. To Father Ubach's care fell the remnant of the Mission Indians, who had been neglected since the expulsion of the Franciscans. The noble race appealed to his great heart, and the betterment of their condition became one of the leading motives of his life. In order to obtain teachers for them and also for a school in San Diego, to which he had transferred his residence from Old Town, he applied to Reverend Mother Agatha, making a visit to Carondelet for that purpose. It was a great disappointment to him that both of his requests could not be acceded to at that time, and that the one refused was the one which he had most at heart, the sending of teachers to the Mission Indians.

This was deferred for several years, but on April 18, 1882, the first community, consisting of Sisters Ambrosia O'Neill, Eutichiana Piccini, Amelia Leon, and Coletta Dumbach, arrived at San Diego. On May 10, they began their day school in a small frame house on a terrace overlooking the bay, registering on that day twenty-eight girls and two boys. On June 13, the first Mass was said in the tiny chapel of the convent, which was dedicated to Our Lady of Peace. Small and poor in its beginning, it was the grain of mustard seed sown in fertile soil; and in 1884, was removed to a new site, where three years later the main building of an academy for both boarders and day pupils was put up by the Superior, Sister Valeria Bradshaw, who also erected in 1893 an additional hall containing music rooms, art studios and an auditorium with a seating capacity of six hundred.

[14] Mission San Diego. It was here that Father Luis Jayme suffered martyrdom at the hands of hostile Indians.

Sister Valeria was a woman of high ideals and broad vision. She had a rare faculty for making and keeping friends for herself and for the Congregation, to which she was devotedly attached. To promote its best interests, and to do all the good possible to everyone with whom she came in contact, were the great aims of her beautiful life. Her gentleness and refinement, her kind thoughtfulness for others, and above all her charity for the poor and suffering and her remarkable tact in rendering them assistance, won her the love and respect of all classes. To the members of her own household she was a continual inspiration; to all the missions of the Congregation in California a benefactress by her sympathy at all times, and by her advice and material aid whenever these were needed.

Sister Valeria remained in charge of the academy ten years. She was succeeded by Sister Margaret Mary Brady, who maintained the high standard set by her predecessor for the institution. The progress of the pupils at Our Lady of Peace, and the character of their attainments were illustrated on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary. The preparations for properly celebrating this event were commenced in 1907 by the people of San Diego, loyal supporters of the academy. The death of Father Ubach, its life-long friend, occurred in March of that year; and the anniversary exercises, in which he would have proudly participated as the co-worker of the Sisters for a quarter of a century, were postponed until June 11 of the following year. A mission play, *Carmelita,* was composed in commemoration of the occasion by an alumna, Madge Mannix, daughter of Mary E. Mannix, whose delightful stories for children find a place in every Catholic library. The artistic play was enacted by the girls of the academy before an enthusiastic audience, the gifted young author assuming the title rôle.

The Los Angeles *Tidings* of September 21, 1921, paid tribute to the efficiency of the academy:

It is difficult to estimate the work done by the Sisters who for so many years have promoted the growth of the Academy of Our

Lady of Peace, in addition to which they supervise the parochial schools of the city. They have not only labored in the cause of educational expansion and influenced the ambitions and aims of the young women of San Diego, but have also earnestly sought the promotion of that truer education which results in refinement of mind and the achieving of standards and ideals.

The parochial schools attended from the academy are St. Joseph's, St. John's and Our Lady of the Angels. The growth of the city gradually bringing the business districts into close proximity to the convent property moved the Academy Corporation to seek a new site on Mission Hills, unsurpassed for beauty, and full of historic interest as overlooking the lower height from which Father Serra watched with longing eyes for the San Antonio.

The second mission of the Congregation in California was in Oakland, to which place Reverend Mother Agatha accompanied the first band of Sisters in the fall of 1883. They went on the invitation of Reverend Bernard McNally, the zealous pastor of St. Patrick's parish, and a prominent figure in the educational work of the Archdiocese of San Francisco. Five Sisters composed the first teaching staff, with Sister Florence Benigna O'Reilly, a young woman of earnest purpose and lofty ideals, as Superior. They organized on January 1, 1884, St. Joseph's Institute, a school for girls and small boys. Two hundred pupils were received, and the number increased so rapidly that two Sisters were added to the teaching faculty the following summer. Temporary quarters only had been used, and in August 1885, the school and convent were built. New class and music rooms were added in 1888. In 1886, Sister Florence was replaced by Sister Xavier Mahoney, and succeeding Superiors were Sisters Columba Banyard, Louis Nugent, and Julia Ford, who in 1907, was transferred to the Eastern Province as directress of schools. A commercial department for girls commenced in 1909 met with great success; and in 1912, on the departure of the Christian Brothers, who had taught the large

boys, their school was taken over by the Sisters. The separate arrangement of classes was preserved until the following year, when, under the direction of Sister Demetria Reynolds, then in charge of the Institute, co-education was introduced. The death of Father McNally in 1913 bereft the school and community of a devoted father and friend, one who had promoted the interests of both for thirty years.

For eighteen years, Father McNally was also the friend and active patron of the Deaf-Mute Institute commenced in Oakland in 1895. This benevolent undertaking was due to Margaret McCourtney, a charitable widow, who gave for that purpose her estate in what was then a suburb of Oakland known as Temescal. She obtained from Archbishop Riordan the necessary permission for its foundation, and requested that it be given into the care of the Sisters of St. Joseph. The first teachers, Sisters Alphonsus Peters and Rose Catherine Casey, were sent from the deaf-mute school in St. Louis, and the institution was placed in charge of Sister Valeria Bradshaw, who was assisted in her undertaking by numerous friends and benefactors. Without endowment, and almost wholly dependent on charity, the home was never able to support large numbers; but its influence among adult deaf through the St. Francis de Sales' Society for religious training and for the promotion of social intercourse among Catholics of this class was widespread in the city and its environs. An Ephpheta Society, actively interested in the work of the school, numbers four hundred members.

On January 6, 1889, five Sisters from Carondelet, accompanied by Reverend Mother Agatha, arrived at Los Angeles, and were met by Sister Valeria, who had come from San Diego to supervise the equipping of St. Mary's Academy, built in St. Vincent's parish by Reverend Father Meyer, of the Congregation of the Mission. On Monday following the arrival of the Sisters, the school was opened under the direction of Sister Evelyn O'Neill with an attendance of sixty-five pupils. Year by year, it extended its influence and activities, and in 1903,

already enlarged by the erection of a new wing to the original structure, was occupying two buildings, to which a third was added in 1904. On May 1, 1903, His Excellency, Diomede Falconio, celebrated Mass in St. Mary's chapel, his first on California soil, and imparted the Papal blessing to the assembled community and students. It was on this occasion that the initial arrangements were made for the transfer of the Provincial House to Los Angeles. In the following November, Mother Elizabeth Parrott, Provincial Superior, who had been residing in Tucson, took up her official residence at St. Mary's; and on March 19, 1904, six postulants received the habit of the Sisterhood from the hands of Bishop Conaty, and formed the nucleus of the California novitiate.

In the fall of 1906, Mother Herman Joseph O'Gorman as Provincial Superior, arrived in Los Angeles, which had grown from the small pueblo of the early nineties to a large and enterprising center. St. Mary's was again calling for greater accommodations, and a twenty acre tract had been selected southwest of the city, on rising ground eight miles from the ocean. The site commanded a fine view of the city and the Sierra Madre Range on the north and east, and the slopes of the Palos Verdes on the south. Here on June 15, 1910, the corner stone of the new St. Mary's was laid by Bishop Conaty, who, also, on August 19 of the following year, blessed and dedicated the completed structure.

Built in Spanish Mission style, it embodied the best traditions of that form of architecture, the interior arrangements being in keeping with the general design. Deep arcades, flower-filled patios, and pergolas in the midst of tropical gardens, form attractive external features; and within the attention is arrested by well-lighted studios looking out on unrivaled views; the library with its rich collection of rare books and paintings; and the chapel, where a perfect harmony of tone and color—the work of the Tiffany Studios of New York—produces an effect of beauty more easily visioned than described. Besides

the novitiate and community apartments, the academy contains accommodations for four hundred students.

At the dedication of St. Mary's, attended by scores of enthusiastic friends and patrons, Bishop Conaty reviewed the work of the Sisters, referring in grateful terms to their honorable record in the West, the heroism of their lives, and the sacrifices made by them from the time of their original foundation at Tucson in 1870 to their latest achievement in his episcopal city. He expressed the confident hope that the new St. Mary's

> would grow and flourish and be in the future even more than in the past a center of power by which the Church of God might reach the minds and hearts of the people and bring them to a better knowledge of God and a greater love for the things of religion.

That it realized this hope is evident in the later careers of its two hundred graduates, and in the large enrollment of pupils drawn from Mexico and British Columbia, from every State between the Pacific and the Rocky Mountains, and from Missouri, Alabama, Minnesota, Dakota and the District of Columbia. The class of 1911 sent four of its members to the novitiate, where they were followed by others of succeeding classes; and several of its alumnae fill responsible positions in the University of California, to which the academy is affiliated. Closely associated with the growth of St. Mary's since 1899 is Mother St. Catherine Beavers to whose ability and foresight is largely due its broad cultural development. She was named Provincial Superior in 1916, to succeed Mother Marcella Manifold, whose death occurred that year after a brief illness in Tucson during her visitation of the province.

Mother Marcella had given much care and attention to unifying the work of the parochial schools, which were multiplying rapidly. For sixteen years, from 1898 until 1914, San Carlos School in Monterey was in charge of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. In 1905, St. Joseph's Institute at Oxnard, California, and in 1906, Our Lady of Guadalupe for Spanish speaking children were added

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to the list. A school under the patronage of the Star of the Sea, opened in San Francisco December 8, 1908, numbered at the end of ten years seven hundred pupils, and had increased its faculty from five to sixteen teachers. Two of its alumni in the ecclesiastical Seminary at Menlo Park, forty boys in the service of their country, and five of its girl graduates in the novitiate at Los Angeles, is the enviable record of its first decade. St. Vincent's, Holy Cross, St. Patrick's, and St. Cecelia's Schools in Los Angeles; St. James' at Redondo Beach, and Our Lady of Victory in Fresno, complete the line of California missions, another *camina real,* which the Sisters of Saint Joseph have followed along the earlier road traced by Father Serra and his devoted missionaries from San Diego to San Francisco.

CHAPTER XVI

MISSIONARY WORK AMONG THE WESTERN INDIANS

In the center of the Santa Cruz Valley, nine miles from Tucson, lies the old mission church of San Xavier del Bac. The Mission was founded in 1700 by the Jesuit, Father Kino, for the Indians whom he first met there in 1692, and whom he designates in his diary as the Sobaipuris of the north. "I found the natives very affable and friendly," he wrote August 23, 1692, "and particularly so in the principal ranchería of San Xavier del Baac, which contains more than eight hundred souls." [1] They listened eagerly to his instructions and signified their wish to become Christians. On his fourth visit to them, which, in company with two Jesuit companions and three soldiers, he made in October 1699, "more than forty boys came forth to meet us with crosses in their hands, and there were more than three hundred Indians drawn up in line just as in the pueblos of the ancient Christians. Afterward, we counted more than a thousand souls." [2]

In 1700, Father Kino determined to build a temple to the Lord, and on April 28 that year

> began the foundation of a very large and capacious church and house of San Xavier del Baac, all the many people working with much pleasure and zeal, some in digging for the foundations, others in hauling many and good stones of *tezontle* from a little hill which was about a quarter of a league away.[3]

What progress was made at that time on the church, Father Kino does not say. He makes but one other mention of it in his Memoirs, which end in 1711; but that the practical mission-

[1] Kino, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 122.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 205.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 235.

ary was building for the future is evident from the manner in which the work was carried on:

> For the mortar for the foundations, it was not necessary to haul water, because by means of irrigation ditches, we very easily conducted the water where we wished. And that house with its great court and garden near by will be able to have throughout the year all the water it may need, running to any place or workroom one may please, and one of the greatest and best fields in all Nueva Biscaya.[4]

In 1768, after the expulsion of the Jesuits, Father Garces, one of fourteen Franciscans sent from the College of Querétaro in Mexico to carry on the work of the earlier missionaries, was assigned to San Xavier. The dozen or more years which he spent there were years of great hardship. He was entirely devoid of personal comfort, his bed the bare ground, his food consisting often of roasted corn and wild thistles, the rude fare of the Indians, whom he won "by his zeal in accommodating himself to their barbarous customs." [5] His successors, beginning in 1783, continued to build in a rare setting of white desert and green mountain, the splendid architectural pile, the church of San Xavier, their own memorial in an alien land, the completion of which required fourteen years. The church of white stone and brick was cruciform, with two square towers, carved façade, and rounded dome above the tile-roofed transept. Frescos and statues of martyrs and apostles adorned the interior, and a harmonious chime of bells, cast at the Mission, called the natives to morning prayers, said in common on the square before the church, to Mass and breakfast, and then to work.

The overthrow of colonial government in Mexico in 1822, and the subsequent confiscation of the property of the Church, spelled doom for this as well as for so many prosperous settlements. When Arizona was annexed to the diocese of Santa Fe in 1859, the Indians of San Xavier, though years without a

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 236.

[5] J. B. Salpointe, *San Xavier del Baac*, p. 6. Phamphlet, San Francisco, 1880.

resident priest, were found to have retained the Faith, were of excellent moral character, and had not forgotten the prayers taught them in Spanish by the early missionaries. They could even sing parts of the Mass, and a pious chief had kept in his possession the gold and silver vessels of the church, chalices, monstrance, cruets and censer, lest these should be lost or stolen.[6]

The buildings were in a ruinous condition and no trace remained of the marvelous mission life of early days, when, in 1873, the first Sisters of St. Joseph were sent to San Xavier. The Papago tribe, numbering then about four hundred, was under the protection of the United States Government, and the Indian agent there had asked for Catholic teachers. East of the church was the mission cloister, of which six rooms remained, two adjoining the tower, the other forming a south wing. These were put in repair by the Government with the sanction of Bishop Salpointe, and used for class rooms. The school was proceeding prosperously, when in April 1876, it was discontinued by an order from the Interior Department consolidating the Papago Agency with that of the Pimas.

The Papagos remained without an agent or any educational provision for twelve years, until in 1888 the Sisters were called a second time to San Xavier. In September of that year, Sisters Florence Benigna O'Reilly, Bernadette Smith, and Agnes Orosco went from Tucson, to find the school again in a dilapidated condition and the natives suffering from long years of neglect. With patient labor these three Sisters made a few rooms habitable, and protected themselves as best they could from the nocturnal visits of innumerable bats that found a hiding place by day in the cactus covering of the broken roof. A small room in the church tower was their chapel, reached by a single narrow stairway cut out of the thick rock wall.

In January, 1889, Sister Aquina Duffy became a member of the small staff at San Xavier; and when the Sisters, who at first returned every Friday evening to Tucson, began to reside

[6] J. D. SALPOINTE, *Soldiers of the Cross,* p. 227. Banning California, 1898.

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permanently at the mission, she was made Superior, and spent thirty years in that capacity among the Papagos. To her exertions and self-sacrifice are principally due the wonderful results accomplished in that time. When the Sisters arrived, these people had reverted in their manner of living to the first stages of civilization. They had never been nomadic, and at this time they lodged in huts called "wickiups," made of sticks and straw, with very low doors and no windows. Their principal food was the mesquite bean cooked in water. To this was added a deer or other wild game, whenever, on very rare occasions, a native overcame his indolence sufficiently to use a bow and arrow. Their cooking was done out of doors, and the bare floors of the wickiups served as receptacles for all utensils. Cleanliness and work of any kind were alike unknown to them. The women and girls were scantily clothed, the men and boys used blankets; and all, with the exception of the very young children, who were left neglected at home, played with balls, which the men kicked before them for miles, spending nearly the entire day in this sport. The time which was not devoted to play was given up to tribal dances on the mountains, in which all the adults took part; and the children ran wild and unclad about the village.

These the Sisters gathered up and brought to school, where the first exercise of the day was an ablution, not always willingly submitted to by the little Papagos. Gradually, thirty children were registered as regular attendants. In order to reach the parents, few of whom then knew either English or good Spanish, it was necessary to speak their language. After two years study of this, Sister Aquina was able to converse with them. She visited their huts, access to which was neither easy nor agreeable; and after repeated efforts, induced the women to give up games and care for their homes and children. Long after stoves were placed in their huts, they continued their out door preparation of meals; and ten years elapsed before any of the village women would use a sewing machine. The first machine at the Mission was a curiosity, and drew hundreds to see it.

The school girls were adepts before their mothers would dare to touch the humming instrument that wrought such wonders as they saw performed with thread and cloth. Finally a Papago woman, more venturesome than her timid sisters, tried her skill; and her delight over her own unsuspected ability was communicated to others, who promptly emulated her example.

In 1896, the school had so increased in numbers that a new room was built for the small children. The first adobe house on the reservation was put up in 1900, replacing a straw hut. Others succeeded until the wickiups had disappeared, and a village of neat and comfortable homes sprang up, each with its surrounding farm or garden. The men had learned to till their land and plant crops. When these, as sometimes happened, were washed out by heavy rains, the patient toilers, without a murmur planted again and waited for new results. The women kept their houses in order, made their clothing, and had learned to mold pottery and weave baskets. Their first attempts at these distinctively Indian arts were crude; but aided by the Sisters and their own native instinct, they became experts, using for the pottery the red and white clay of the region, which they burned over a fire of cactus wood and painted with juice of the mesquite; and for the basketry, the pliable stems of the yucca, bear grass, and the black leaves of the devil's claw, a plant indigenous to southern Arizona. The peculiar mysticism of the race is apparent during the process of weaving. To the low and rhythmic crooning of Indian melodies, the women work into their baskets unique designs of symbolic meaning, expressive in many instances of the wild yearning that had filled their hearts for a knowledge of the better things so long denied them.

All the villagers looked on the Sisters as their guides and arbiters, referring to them various difficulties, and even family disputes. Men and women came seeking instruction, and after weary hours spent in the class rooms with the children, the Sisters gave their evenings to the parents preparing these for the sacraments. On account of the small number of priests in

his diocese, the Bishop was not always able to give a resident chaplain to San Xavier. In consequence, the Sisters were obliged to baptize many who were at the point of death, sometimes going great distances to reach them, and risking their own lives in crossing swollen streams. On one occasion a dying woman who had begged for baptism was carried by her companions to the convent, where she breathed her last before the brief ceremony performed by Sister Aquina was concluded.

In 1906, extensive repairs were made on the Mission buildings, the men contributing out of their small earnings after a season of bad crops a sufficient sum to floor the church, in which until then they were accustomed to kneel or sit on the bare ground. Many improvements made in the school modernized the ancient cloisters without destroying the Mission architecture. A combination dining and entertainment hall provided a place for the annual closing exercises given by the children to their parents, the agent, and the Bishop. A grotto of Lourdes, excavated in 1908 in the side of Holy Cross Mountain east of the Mission, and provided by Bishop Granjon with an imported statue, life-size and of fine workmanship, became a scene of yearly pilgrimage, where hundreds of devout worshippers gather to honor the Virgin Mother and obtain the favor of her who, under another title, Our Lady of Guadalupe, showed by a shower of roses her love for a simple race. At this shrine, in May and October, the Indians of the reservation join with the children in processions, the recitation of the Rosary and the singing of hymns.

An annual event of exceptional solemnity, and one on which the native population makes publicly a touching Profession of Faith, is the feast of the Mission's patron, St. Francis Xavier. The three days' celebration, civic and religious in character, is directed by twelve chiefs chosen from the tribe each year as part of an ecclesiastical function presided over by the Bishop, who is loved as a father, and who pontificates at Mass and Benediction of the third day, addressing the assembly in English

and Spanish, sometimes in Papago. After the Rosary, said in the musical Spanish that is the Mission Indian's second mother tongue, and the chanting of the Litany to an ancient melody, the twelve chiefs, kneeling before the shrine of St. Francis and with hands reverently touching his banner, promise fidelity to the trust imposed on them for the following year; and one of their number, chosen to be their head, receives from the Bishop the symbol of authority, a curiously wrought sceptre of gold and ebony. An observer of this yearly demonstration, writes:

> To one witnessing this celebration for the first time, it seems like a vision of centuries past. However, it is but one of many lessons that these people have learned from their good missionaries; a lesson that has been instrumental in keeping them close to God and their Catholic religion.[7]

In 1913, the Franciscan Fathers, after a lapse of nearly one hundred years, were again given charge of the spiritual affairs of the Mission. They were instrumental in erecting a large hall for the use of the young men, clubs and social recreations having become a feature of life in the reservation.[8] The patriotism of the Papagos during the World War was a subject of comment, the women, under the direction of the Sisters, making valuable contributions to the Red Cross, and the men investing their savings in Liberty Bonds. Many of San Xavier's boys, though not subject to draft, enlisted for service, among them Sergeant Charles Solis, whose death at Camp Kearney was one of the earliest fatalities in the ranks, and who was buried at the Mission with military honors.

The fiftieth anniversary of the arrival in Arizona of the Sisters of Saint Joseph was observed at Tucson as a civic holiday, proclaimed as such by the Mayor, and participated in by the municipal authorities. The *Tucson Sentinal* of May 23, 1920,

[7] Nicholas Perschl, o. f. m. in *The Indian Sentinel*, p. 27. July 1917.

[8] Prominent among these are the San Xavier Club, a Mission Band, and a Farmers' Association.

referring to the Americanization of the Papagos, and attributing it wholly to the Sisters, writes:

> Fully as remarkable and worthy of pen and paint as San Xavier itself, is the civilization of the Papago. The golden anniversary of the Sisters of St. Joseph can have no brighter or more honorable feature than the stupendous work against superhuman odds out at San Xavier. There is perhaps no record of like achievement with like instruments on like objects in the history of the United States.

While the Sisters were thus engaged among the Papagos, reviving the former usefulness of San Xavier, fittingly named by tourists the "White Dove of the Desert," similar scenes were being enacted north of them by other members of the Congregation. In 1886, Reverend Mother Agatha was requested by Reverend J. A. Stephan, acting for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs at Washington, to send a community of her Sisters to Fort Yuma on the Indian reservation of that name in California. Fort Yuma was located on high ground along the Colorado River near its junction with the Gila, nine miles from the Mexican border. The reservation of forty-five thousand acres stretched along the Colorado for twenty miles, and with the exception of a narrow strip near the river bank on which the natives grew their corn, wheat and melons, was desert land. It was occupied by the Yuma Indians, a tribe numbering between eight hundred and a thousand souls.

The Yumas were pagans. More than a hundred years had passed since a vain attempt had been made to Christianize the natives of this region by Father Garces, who, from his mission at San Xavier del Bac, made occasional entries into the country of the Yumas. According to Reverend Zephyrin Engelhardt, the Franciscan historian of the missions, Father Garces on these occasions illustrated his instructions by a large canvas having on one side a picture of the Blessed Virgin, and on the other one of a lost soul in hell. "The Yumas were highly pleased," he

relates, "with the picture of the 'beautiful lady,' but the sight of the 'lost soul' they abhorred. They were not such fools, they declared, as not to know that the good people were above and the bad ones far down under the ground."[9] They welcomed the presence of a priest among them; and on their petition, two missions were established, one of which was near the site of the present Fort, and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin under the title of *La Purissima Concepcion.*

Friendly and docile at first, the Yumas were rendered desperate by the interference of the Mexican Commandante, De Croix, who appropriated the best of their lands for his soldiers and other white settlers. They rose in rebellion on July 17, 1781, set fire to the missions, murdered the soldiers and missionaries including Father Garces, and carried women and children into captivity. They then reverted as a tribe to their former ignorance and superstition, very few retaining any memory of the missionaries; but a strange tradition lingered among them that a band of white-robed figures could be seen walking among the ruins of *La Purissima Concepcion,* bearing crosses and chanting hymns. The Yumas resisted any further attempts to Christianize or educate them, and maintained an unfriendly if not a hostile attitude, until, in 1852 the United States Government erected the Fort, and placed troops there mainly as a protection against the Apaches. In 1884, the control of the Fort was transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior; and an executive order of January 9, 1884, established the Yuma Reservation.[10] For two years after the withdrawal of the soldiers in 1884, a school was maintained at the Fort by a Presbyterian teacher and her assistant; but it had not succeeded, being looked upon with disfavor by the chief of the tribe. It was on this account that the Indian Commissioner, John H. Oberly, appealed to Father Stephan for Catholic teachers.

[9] *Missions and Missionaries of California,* vol. II, p. 192. San Francisco, 1912.

[10] *Executive Document No. 68,* p. 6. 52d Congress, 2d Session, 1894.

The Yumas were still pagans in 1886. They believed in two deities, a good one, who dwelt on grassy plains somewhere to the south and west of their own arid lands; and a bad one in the center of the earth, whose restless turnings on his subterranean bed caused the earthquakes that sometimes destroyed their small mud houses. They burned their dead on funeral pyres with weird rites, and then destroyed the huts of the deceased lest the spirits of the departed should return. The children ran about without clothing of any kind; the women wore a single short garment woven of the bark of trees; and the braves, except when they donned some sort of civil apparel to appear in the city, made themselves hideous with paint, laying on first a coat of dark scarlet, over which they traced parallel lines of black, blue, or green, and set off the whole with an abundance of white paint in round dots or in curious filigree patterns. All wore their hair long and believed that if it were cut, they would be deprived of their strength and of their speed as runners.

Reverend Mother, knowing something of these conditions from her frequent visits to the West, refused the first requests that were made to her in behalf of the Yumas. She feared that efforts to bring them to a knowledge of God would prove fruitless, especially since the school was to be directly under government auspices. Pressure was brought to bear on the matter by members of the Catholic Indian Bureau. These represented the favorable attitude of the Government towards religious instruction as just expressed in President Cleveland's message to Congress, wherein he drew attention to "the self-sacrificing and pious men and women who have aided in the good work by their independent endeavor," and recommended that "their valuable services be fully acknowledged by all who under the law are charged with the control and management of our Indian wards." [11] Assured that the Sisters would be in no way ham-

[11] *First Annual Message of Grover Cleveland,* Dec. 8, 1885, in *Messages and Papers of the Presidents,* 1903, vol. VIII, p. 356. These sentiments were in accordance also with the "Peace Policy" inaugurated by General Grant in 1870.

pered by the Administration, Reverend Mother delegated six teachers for this mission, five of whom remained in Tucson while the superior, Sister Ambrosia O'Neill, accompanied by Mother Julia Littenecker, then on a visit to the western houses, went on March 16 to Yuma City, Arizona, opposite the Fort, there to await the formal transfer of the school from the Colorado Agency. This took place, after many preliminaries and much signing of bonds, on April 15.

The two Sisters profited by the interval to study their surroundings and to become acquainted with the tribe and its venerable chief, Pasqual. They were residing, during a temporary closing of the convent school in Yuma, with a good Catholic widow, Pieta Redondo, and her interesting family. This excellent woman knew and understood the Yumas well, and testified to their character for honesty. They had been taught by their chief to hate drinking, lying and stealing; and any one found guilty of these vices received chastisement by flogging at the hands of Pasqual himself. The introductory meeting of the Sisters with this white-haired warrior, an imposing figure of giant stature, straight and lithe in spite of his great age, took place on March 18, the occasion being their initial visit to the Fort. Seeing them coming, he advanced to meet them, kissing their hands and showing them every mark of respect. He then kept aloof for weeks studying them from a distance. The friendly natives crossed the river almost daily to assure the Sisters of their own and their chief's good-will. They brought frequent requests from the latter for an interview, which finally took place a month after their first meeting. Mother Julia wrote to Reverend Mother of this event on April 15:

We met Pasqual at the Fort this morning. As soon as he saw us, he sent a messenger for his interpreter, who was on the spot in a little while. We had then a long conversation with him in which he told us all the troubles and grievances of his people. He wanted to know who sent us, and what we came to do for them. After we told him, he said that though an old man (he is over a

hundred years old), he would do his part towards us; that if we came to do them good, he would be good to us, and would also teach his people to be good to us; that hitherto many fine promises had been made to him and his people by persons sent by the Government, but these were not carried out, and now he would like to see proofs, he has been so often disappointed.

The old man was distrustful of the whites, and refused to ask anything from the "Great Father" at Washington, but would be happy if the Sisters could obtain help for his people, who, in seasons of drought or when the inundations of the Colorado washed out their crops, were driven to the verge of starvation. The desert provided no game, and their only sustenance came from the strip of fertile land along the river banks.

The meeting over, the chief sought out a prominent Mexican living at Yuma and asked the latter's opinion of the Sisters. When satisfied that their intentions were of the best, and that they meant to do great good to his children, he sent runners to all parts of the reservation, summoning the tribesmen to a great council, which did not take place until two weeks later. In the meantime, the remaining Sisters arrived from Tucson under the escort of Father Juan Chaucot, and on May 1, all took up their residence at the Fort.

This was well constructed, and consisted of a dozen or more large, one-story buildings arranged in the form of a parallelogram around an open court, in the center of which stood a lofty flagpole. Here the Indian councils were accustomed to take place. There were, besides, the captain's house of eight rooms, a laundry, a bakery, a workshop and stables. The whole commanded a magnificent view of the Colorado and Gila rivers at their junction, of Yuma City and of the surrounding valley, with the mountains in the distance. The best preserved of the one-story buildings was selected as a chapel; the others were for class rooms and apartments for the children from the reservation, who were kept as boarders. The captain's house, apart from the rest, made an excellent convent, and the Sisters called it

El Monte de Buena Esperanza, the Mount of Good Hope. Sister Ambrosia was dignified by the Yumas with the title of *El Capitan.* Dusky young braves vied with each other in clearing out the accumulated rubbish of two years, and making the rooms habitable. Until the arrival of government supplies, which were furnished generously, the Sisters contented themselves with a few chairs for furniture, a table, a rickety stove, and borrowed cots without mattresses or pillows.

The great council took place on May 3 in the courtyard of the Fort, where Indians, assembled from all quarters, gathered around the flag-pole and were addressed by their chief on the subject of the school. They were exhorted to send their children, especially the young ones, who could learn readily "while their heads were tender." The Sisters were present by request of the chief, and his words were interpreted for them by a Mohave who could speak English and Spanish. The School was organized after a first Mass said in the chapel on May 5. Ten children were registered on that day as boarders, and before June the number had increased to sixty. On May 13, Mother Julia wrote:

> It is quite amusing to see old men, and squaws with their papooses running towards the school when the bell is rung for class. They are all anxious to see the little ones in rank marching into the school room. After all the children are in, the grown Indians, fathers, mothers and relatives, enter, too, and sit down on the floor in the back of the room, as still as mice, watching everything going on. For the present we have to suffer it in order to gain them. We are glad to have them present for Catechism. The Interpreter is always present to translate it into the Yuma vernacular; thus some of the older ones are instructed with the children.

At the time this letter was written, eight days after the opening of school, the little Yumas were able to make the Sign of the Cross and say the Lord's Prayer in English, and could sing the hymn "O Sanctissima" with the Sisters. The class hours

were from nine o'clock in the morning until half past three in the afternoon. The ordinary branches were introduced gradually, with sewing and domestic work for the girls under the tutelage of the Sisters, and manual labor for the boys, taught them by an industrial teacher sent from Washington. Policemen, matrons, and numerous other officials were appointed from the tribe. The children learned English readily, and were fond of singing; but they gave up their wild, free life reluctantly. On one occasion, all were found to have disappeared from the Fort, leaving the class rooms empty. Hours of search revealed the boys enjoying a plunge in the Colorado river; the girls had fled to their huts on the reservation, and were brought back in a body by the chief.

As was expected, the placing of Sisters in charge of the school caused much comment, especially on the part of some non-Catholics who were bitterly opposed to the plan, and who in the beginning looked upon it as an experiment, doomed to certain failure. The first public expression of hostile sentiment was an abusive letter published by the San Francisco *Argonaut* of November 15, 1886, calling attention to the existence of "a governmental nunnery at Fort Yuma." The anonymous writer declared that the state of affairs "is galling in the extreme, and silent mutterings may develop into public indignation." Public indignation was indeed aroused, but it was directed against the writer and the *Argonaut*. Both were brought to task by their critics. The prominence thus given the school won it many defenders, and government inspectors gave it their hearty approval.

None were louder in its praise than Chief Pasqual, who, leaving his hut on the reservation, made his home in one of the buildings at the Fort, and observed closely all that was going on. To some of the officials, he expressed himself as satisfied that his children were well treated. If they were not, he said, he would order them all home. At the close of the term, on June 30, assembling the pupils before they separated, he warned

them to return in September; and during the vacation, he made a four days' journey for the purpose of meeting the Diegueno chiefs, thirty miles distant, and entreating them also to send their children to the school.

Ninety boys and girls were registered as boarders in the fall; and in 1887, the Government sent fifty Papago girls from Arizona. In 1891, the total number had risen to one hundred and fifty-two. Many improvements were made on the reservation, among them a steam pump for irrigation. The boys were becoming skilled in agriculture; the girls in the use of the needle and sewing machine. They cut and made their own dresses, as well as the garments which their mothers and small brothers and sisters at home had been with much difficulty induced to adopt.

The first baptism among the Yumas occurred on May 15, 1886. It was that of a boy of twelve years, a relative of the chief, who was brought to the hut of the latter in a dying condition. The old man called on the Sisters, and asked if the "Sister Doctor," Sister Alphonsus Lamb, could not do something for the little sufferer. It was too late, however, for earthly remedies; and, with Pasqual's permission, the child was baptized and given the Christian name of John. Pasqual's own conversion was one of ninety-six which occurred the following year. He had early expressed his intention of becoming a Christian, but desired to be well instructed. Mother Julia, he said, was the first who had ever told him any thing about God, and for this he "was grateful in his heart." He had grown very feeble in the spring of 1887; and the Sisters, knowing that he could not live much longer, asked if he did not wish to be baptized. "Do you think it would be good for me?" he asked of Sister Ambrosia; and upon being told that it would be very good, he answered decisively, "Then I will be baptized." On May 1, Father Chaucot, the beloved *Padre Juan* of the Yumas, poured the waters of salvation over the head of the centenarian chief, and called him Philip after the patron of the day.

A dramatic scene followed, when the ancients of the tribe, after an angry council, reproached their dying chief for deserting the gods of his ancestors at the bidding of the Sisters. Without a word to them, Pasqual sent his interpreter for the Sisters, and in the presence of all, declared in a loud, firm voice, that he had become a Christian of his own free will, because he thought that it was good to do so. His death occurred on May 9, and he was buried with the usual pagan rites. The Yumas were eventually induced to give up the practice of burning their dead, especially those who had been baptized; but they could not lay aside the time-honored custom in the case of their great chieftain. He was arrayed as a warrior in showy apparel, the insignia of his office—a green silk scarf adorned with a rosette—wrapped about his head. His bow and arrow with other war trophies were laid beside the body, and the whole burned amid great cries and lamentations. Two of his favorite horses were decked out in gaudy trappings, and after being ridden thrice around the pyre, were killed and buried beside it.

The example of the chief in embracing Christianity was contagious. In 1888, two hundred and seventeen children and adults were baptized; in 1889, three hundred and one; and in 1890, two hundred and twenty-five. In the same year, 1890, one hundred and ten children made their first Communion and were confirmed by Right Reverend Francis Mora of Los Angeles, assisted by Father Chaucot, and Father William Demflin, a Dominican missionary widely known among the western tribes as Padre Guillermo. The latter had prepared the neophytes for the sacraments. The parents of the children and many non-Catholics from Yuma crowded into the small chapel to witness the impressive ceremony, and to hear the Bishop's address. The girls wore white, with white veils; and all sang feelingly to an organ accompaniment the Communion hymn, the *Veni Creator* and the English *Te Deum.*

The difficulties which the Sisters experienced in bringing about these happy results, and the annoyances to which they

were subjected, sometimes by officials and at other times by unfriendly members of the tribe, cannot be over estimated. A large number of the Yumas remained pagan; and to this pagan class belonged Pasqual's successor, Chief Miguel. The latter was unpopular with the best of his tribesmen, and numerous misdemeanors of a serious nature on his part increased their dissatisfaction. He was deposed in May, 1893, and another chosen in his stead. He became the leader of a faction, and induced his followers to keep their children away from school. In this he was upheld by members of a denominational church in Los Angeles, who sent him a token of respect for the stand which he was taking against the Sisters.

Emboldened by the support which he received, he secretly planned the death of *El Capitan,* whose influence, he thought, was responsible for his deposition. The attack was set for the night of October 27, 1893. The unusual activity of the pagan group, "Bad Indians" they were called, aroused the suspicions of Sister Ambrosia, who with one Sister—the others were distributed by twos in the different buildings with the children—spent an agonizing night listening to the death songs of those who were preparing the pyre. Time and again as the hours wore on, the would-be assassins approached the convent; and then as if seized by an irresistible impulse, turned and fled. At an early hour the following morning a faithful Yuma rushed in with the warning to Sister Ambrosia to leave the house at once and seek refuge below the hill. She had scarcely reached her hiding place, when the convent was filled with a furious mob of pagan Indians, who, finding instead of *El Capitan* a hastily summoned guard, fell to fighting the latter until they, themselves, were overpowered. Miguel, with eight of his followers, was brought to trial, and all were given prison sentences to be served out in the penitentiary at Los Angeles.

When his evil influence was removed, tranquility again reigned on the reservation; and in the following year, 1894, the tribe showed its gratitude to the Sisters and its indorsement of their

work in a very effective manner. A commission [12] was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior [13] to negotiate with the Yumas for the "cession to the United States of such portions of their reservation as they might be willing to cede." [14] this land to be sold and the proceeds used for improving the remainder by building levees and irrigating ditches, and for the general benefit of the Yumas. The latter demanded as a sole condition of their considering the cession, that the Sisters be left in possession of the school, and be allowed in addition a half-section of land for farming purposes,[15] nor would they affix a single signature to the agreement drawn up by the commission until they were assured that their demand would be complied with. Their wishes were respected, and embodied in Article VIII of the agreement, which was then signed by two hundred and three adult Indians.[16] There were one hundred and eighty-two children in school at the time, and this remained the average number during the succeeding six years, at the end of which time Reverend Mother Agatha withdrew the Sisters permanently from Fort Yuma.

This decision on her part came about as an indirect result of the government policy adopted in 1895 for the elimination of contract schools.[17] Congress began in that year a gradual withdrawal of the appropriations made to these institutions, which, at the end of the year 1900, had ceased to exist as such.[18] Fort Yuma, being under government control, was not affected by the new legislation; but seemingly as part of the general movement

[12] Washington J. Houston, Peter R. Brady and John A. Gorman.

[13] Hoke Smith of Georgia.

[14] *Executive Document 68,* p. 2.

[15] *Ibid.,* pp. 8–11.

[16] *Ibid.,* p. 29.

[17] Schools conducted by religious organizations and receiving by agreement with the Department of the Interior a fixed *per capita* sum for supporting and educating Indian pupils. cf. *Speech* of *Hon. J. J. Fitzgerald* of New York in Congress Feb. 2 and 3, 1900, p. 7.

[18] *Ibid.,* May 24, 1900. Cf. also, *"Religious Garb and Insignia in Government Schools."* WM. H. KETCHAM, 1912. (Pamphlet.)

involving schools under religious auspices, the Commissioner of Indian affairs appointed over the Sisters a lay superintendent, rejecting a Catholic recommended for the purpose by the Catholic Indian Bureau, and appointing a Protestant, whose intolerance was soon shown in matters so vital to Catholic children as their attendance at Mass. In consequence, the Sisters, in obedience to Reverend Mother's directions, tendered their resignations at the close of the spring term in 1900, to the satisfaction of the superintendent, but to the lingering grief of the grateful Yumas. The statistics of the mission at that time showed a total of one thousand six hundred and seventy-one baptisms, two hundred and thirty-three Indians confirmed, and forty-five Christian marriages performed among them with nuptial Mass.

At the time that the Sisters were withdrawn from Yuma, other members of the Congregation had been engaged for nearly ten years on the Indian missions in California. On November 1, 1891, Mass was celebrated on the site of the old San Diego Mission in the center of Mission Valley, the first since Father Serra had left it more than a hundred years before. The occasion was the opening of St. Anthony's Indian School, removed to this place from Old Town, where it had been established five years before by Father Ubach, and taught by Sister Hyacinthe Blanc and Sister Teresa. Father Ubach, the *Padre Gaspara* of Helen Hunt Jackson's masterpiece, *Ramona,* is described by the gifted author true to life:

He had a nature at once fiery and poetic. There were but three things he could have been, a soldier, a poet or a priest. Circumstances had made him a priest, and the fire and the poetry which could have wielded the sword or kindled the verse, had he found himself set to fight or sing, had all gathered added force in his priestly vocation. The look of the soldier he had never quite lost . . . and it was the sensitive soul of the poet in him which had made him withdraw within himself, year after year, as he found himself comparatively powerless to do anything for the hundreds

of Indians that he fain would have gathered once more into the keeping of the Church.[19]

He had endeavored to obtain aid from the Government, even going in person to Washington for that purpose; and had finally commenced his small school in cramped and narrow quarters, giving to it what support he could. Obtaining at length a small appropriation, to which was later added some assistance from the Catholic Indian Bureau, he erected in 1891 two large frame buildings, one for boys and one for girls, on either side of the old Mission Church, a portion of which was still standing in the shade of giant palms and fronting an olive orchard of three hundred trees planted by the Padres a century before. The school was an industrial one, where the ordinary branches including music, were supplemented by farming, shoe making and other useful trades for boys under special instructors, and sewing and domestic work for girls. Between ninety and one hundred children was the average number in attendance. They were docile and gentle, with the strong simple faith preserved by their fathers under adverse circumstances, and exemplified in their own baptismal names, bestowed on them in all reverence, of Rosa Mystica, Alta Gracia, and even Jesus and its soft diminutive, Jesucita.

In the winter of 1891-92, a severe earthquake shock, the worst experienced in California for years, shook the frame buildings, damaging them considerably and causing terror to the inmates of St. Anthony's. While the earth tremor was at its height, the Indian children promised that if they were saved through the terrible night, they would build a shrine to Our Lady of Sorrows on the mountain side, and would themselves carry the stones for that purpose. True to their promise, they began their task, some carrying the burden on their heads, others on the palms of outstretched hands; and a path was worn to the favored spot, where the corner stone of the shrine was laid on June 16,

[19] H. H. Jackson, *Ramona*, p. 86. Boston, 1920.

1892. A visitor to the mission, seeing the faithful devotees at their self-imposed task, and hearing the circumstances, gave publicity to the project through the pages of the *Ave Maria,* and many, reading it, desired to share in the work. A statue—the *Pietà*—an altar, stained glass windows, a votive lamp, were among the larger gifts received by the delighted little builders; and the completed shrine, its original plan somewhat altered, was dedicated in a solemn ceremony on the Feast of the Seven Dolors, September, 1893.

The Mission Indians dwindled to a small remnant of their former number; but the school was kept up for many years by the Catholic Indian Bureau in deference to Father Ubach, the patron and apostle for forty years of the tribes around San Diego. After his death, which occurred in 1907, the children were transferred to St. Boniface's Industrial School at Banning, California, established in 1890.

In a beautiful valley between the San Jacinto and San Bernardino mountains, this school was built by the Catholic Indian Bureau, with the assistance of Mother Katherine Drexel; and Father Willard, Vice-President of the Bureau, placed in charge. He contracted typhoid fever after a few months' residence at Banning; and this resulted in his death under circumstances of peculiar pathos, there being no one at the mission during his illness but the Indian boys. In the meantime, Reverend Mother was requested by Monsignor Stephan, and also by Archbishop Ryan of Philadelphia, to send Sisters to the school. Six Sisters were sent, with Sister Celestia O'Reilly as Superior. Reverend Florian Hahn, of the Congregation of the Precious Blood, was appointed superintendent, and an appropriation secured from Congress for the support of one hundred children. When this appropriation was withdrawn a few years later, St. Boniface's received support from diocesan collections, and from the results of the children's industry. One hundred and twenty children were enrolled the first year, and others refused for want of room. The school was blessed with appropriate ceremonies on January

6, 1891. Another memorable day that year was April 22, when President Harrison, on a western tour, made a brief visit to Banning, and the pupils of St. Boniface's were presented to him individually.

The curriculum at St. Boniface's followed the lines of other industrial schools, with horticulture as a specialty for the boys, the vineyards and orchards of fruit and almonds, with gardens of great variety, presenting a practical field for their endeavors. With the first appearance in October 1895, of the *Mission Indian,* a monthly periodical, printing was added to the other useful arts; and the accomplishments of the girls include the finest bead work, and the making of Cluny and Torchon laces. Military drill under a commissioned officer was early made part of the daily routine. The Indians' proverbial love of music found expression in the well organized Mission Band and in three hours' weekly vocal practice enabling them to sing High Mass and Benediction on Sundays with surprising effect. St. Boniface's is now the only Catholic boarding School for Indians in California. The death in 1916 of Father Hahn, who from his headquarters at St. Boniface's visited and instructed the Indians to the south and east of Banning, was a severe loss which was eventually filled by the Franciscan Fathers, coming again into their birthright as the earliest friends and teachers of the Mission Indians in the state.

These zealous Fathers also direct the mission at Komatke on the Pima Reservation near Phoenix, Arizona, which was commenced by them in 1900. When Reverend Mother Agatha was asked in March 1901 to send Sisters to St. John's Mission at Komatke, she delegated the Provincial Superior, Mother Elizabeth Parrott, to see the place if possible and report on conditions there. Mother Elizabeth, securing at Phoenix a competent driver, started with a companion for the distant site, eighteen miles out on the desert. The driver, an old-timer and accustomed to the region, missed a familiar turn in the road, and without perceiving his mistake, drove on for hours, until to his

great surprise he drew up again at Phoenix. A severe sand storm during the succeeding days hindered a second attempt to reach the Pima Reservation, and urgent duty called the Provincial and her companion back to Tucson. These circumstances were afterwards looked upon by the Sisters as due to Providence rather than to chance; for had the real situation at Komatke been known to Reverend Mother, she would have refused the desired community of teachers, in view of the great hardships ahead and the seeming impossibility of a successful outcome to their labors and sacrifices.

Always zealous to better the condition of the Indians, however, she accepted the mission, and the appointed community, Sisters Anna de Sales Powers, Mary Joseph Franco and St. Barbara, arrived at Komatke on August 29. They had made the trip from Tucson by way of Phoenix, where they were the guests for three days of the Sisters of Mercy. From Phoenix they went by stage over desert roads and under a tropical sun, its heat and glare intensified by stretches of white sand, and their courage kept up by the driver's assurance after every few miles of the journey that they were near its end. Shortly after midday, they reached the small adobe house that was their convent, built beside another of the same material that served the double purpose of church and school. There was no other human habitation in sight, as the small huts of the Indians were scattered about the desert at considerable distances from the church, or were so low as to seem part of the sandy waste. The pastor was absent on a sick call, and the driver of the stage, after depositing his passengers, turned and left in all haste, as though, writes the chronicler of the mission, "he were afraid that we would change our minds about staying and return with him." There was no sign of life about the desolate looking place except the scorpions running in and out among the trunks and boxes which had been sent on ahead and were waiting to be unpacked; but, cheerless as the prospect was, Sister Mary Joseph, veteran Indian missionary who had spent many years at Fort Yuma,

expressed the feelings of all in an emphatic exclamation: "Thank God, we are home!"

On the Sunday following their arrival, they made acquaintances among the parents of their future pupils. The majority of these were of the Pima tribe, but there were among them also some Papagos, Apaches, and Yaquis. All welcomed the Sisters in their simple fashion, shaking hands and offering gifts of watermelons raised on their small rancherías. One hundred and twenty day pupils were registered at the school on the following day, ranging in age from six to eighteen years of age. The Pimas were wretchedly poor, depending even for their clothing on contributions from outside the reservation; and the ingenuity of the Sisters was taxed to keep the children clean and properly dressed. These responded readily, however, to instruction: and on December 8, after much patient drilling on the part of Sister Mary Joseph Franco, sang at the first High Mass said in Komatke, their sweet young voices making a pleasing contrast to the quavering tones of the old women who had hitherto led in the singing of Spanish hymns and litanies. Their first Christmas at the school was made happy by Reverend Mother Agatha, who sent gifts for all and a crib, the only one which they had ever seen, though the significance of Christmas was well known to them, and all came to early Mass decked out in the fantastic fashion which they thought suitable to the occasion.

Forty of the children were from other reservations, and as they lived at a distance, were accommodated during the first year at the homes of friendly Pimas, in order to be near the school. The parents of these requested that provision be made to keep them day and night at St. John's. Accordingly, in 1902, Father Justin, with the aid of two Indian men from Casa Blanca —to which settlement, twenty-five miles distant, some of the children belonged—erected two small houses, one for girls and the other for boys. The houses, built after the prevailing mode, were made of arrow weed interlaced on mesquite posts, and covered with mud, and served in turn the purposes of kitchen,

dining room, recreation halls and dormitories. The girls prepared for themselves and the boys the simple meals of bread, coffee and beans, which they cooked over open wood fires and served on a cloth spread out on the floor. At night, all wrapped themselves in their blankets and slept on the ground.

During the first week, St. John's "boarding school" presented the unusual sight of thirty or more small Indians scattered about on the sand hills wrapped in shawls, aprons or pieces of blanket, while the large girls helped the Sisters to wash and make presentable the one suit of clothing which constituted the outfit of each pupil. The first Sunday found all clean, and "as happy as if clothed in silk." Trunks and boxes of needed materials sent from Carondelet and other houses of the Congregation were used to replenish gradually the meagre wardrobes; and the laundry problem was eventually solved by the Franciscan Provincial, who provided the first washing machine. Before the end of the year 1902, Father Justin, enlisting the assistance of the large boys, began to build a new church, for which the faithful Pimas made thirty thousand adobe blocks.

In the following year, the neighboring Maricopas, having learned that there were Sisters at Komatke who spoke their language, abandoned a Protestant Church which they were attending, and came in to St. John's. The confidence of all in the Sisters was exemplified on numerous occasions, when, during long absences of the pastor to distant parts of the reservation, the Indians brought their dead to church and called on the Superior, Sister Anna de Sales, to perform the funeral ceremonies. She satisfied their simple faith by joining with them in prayers for the departed. Mourners, school children and Sisters then formed in procession, and reciting the Rosary, wended their way to the place of burial, where the body was sprinkled with holy water and more prayers said over the newly made grave. The relatives of the deceased, with many expressions of gratitude and reverence, then departed for their homes, comforted because their dead had been interred with Christian rites.

The aged mother of the Pima chief was among the first communicants in May, 1905; and both Pimas and Papagos vied that year in building shrines around the reservation for the Corpus Christi procession, which everywhere among the Indian tribes is an occasion for a public demonstration of their faith. In 1908, one hundred and eighty-six children were residing permanently at the mission, the two poor shacks of 1902 having given place to comfortable adobe houses. These houses increased in number as the school continued to grow, two large dining halls and a sanitarium, both electrically lighted and furnished with modern equipment, being the latest additions to the group; and palms and tropical vegetation altered completely the appearance of the desert mission. Three Franciscan Fathers are in charge of St. John's, assisted by three Brothers of the same Order, nine Sisters, and two disciplinarians. The present enrollment is five hundred and twenty-five, and children are refused yearly for want of room.

The instruction is largely vocational, including training in hospital service for the girls, and plumbing and electrical engineering for the boys. Many of the girls, when their course is completed, remain as matrons, seamstresses and assistants in the sanitarium; and from the boys are recruited skillful mechanics and electricians. St. John's won notable distinction during Industrial Week at the State capitol in 1921, when, at the request of Governor Campbell of Arizona, it entered into competition with the large schools of Phoenix and vicinity in an endeavor to make known the educational and industrial achievements of the Salt River Valley. Other schools competing were the Union High School of Phoenix with fifteen hundred pupils, and the Phoenix Indian Boarding School, a government institution, with eight hundred children. The silver cup awarded to the best school section was carried off by St. John's, the exhibit made by its pupils showing the marvellous development of twenty years.

CHAPTER XVII

REVEREND MOTHER AGNES GONZAGA RYAN. BENEVOLENT WORK OF THE CONGREGATION (1905–1920)

In the spring of 1905, an election was held at the Mother House to fill the place left vacant by the death in the preceding year of the beloved Superior-General, Reverend Mother Agatha Guthrie, the interim between her lamented demise and the assembling of the Chapter having been filled in by her Assistant, Mother Gonzaga Grand. The election, presided over by the Most Reverend John Joseph Glennon, Archbishop of St. Louis, resulted in the choice of Sister Agnes Gonzaga Ryan, who immediately assumed the responsibility of Mother-General, the fourth in line from the revered Mother Celestine.

Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga was born on January 22, 1855, in Houghton, Michigan, and was baptized by the renowned missionary Bishop, Frederic Baraga, then Vicar-Apostolic of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Her early training she received from her parents, devout Irish Catholics in affluent circumstances, who instilled into their five children, of whom she was the eldest, their own characteristic traits of generosity and of delicate and thoughtful consideration for the poor and the unfortunate. When the Sisters of St. Joseph opened in 1866 the first Catholic school in Hancock and one of the very few in all of upper Michigan, Alice Ryan became their apt and diligent pupil. Her devoted teachers, struggling bravely against adverse circumstances in the primitive conditions then prevailing in the Lake district, were a source of great edification to the alert-minded, impulsive young girl; and when she felt herself called to the same life of generous sacrifice, she did not hesitate to break the strong ties that bound her to home and friends.

MOTHER AGNES GONZAGA RYAN
1855–1917

In the fall of 1873, she entered the novitiate of the Provincial House in Troy, New York, attracted to that place rather than to the Mother House in St. Louis by the presence in Troy as Provincial Superior of Mother Gonzaga Grand, whom she had known and loved in Hancock as one of its pioneer community. With two other postulants, she received the habit of the Sisterhood on December 25, 1873, the date an unusual concession to the ardor of the young aspirants. After her profession on March 19, 1876, she taught for several years in Troy. Her quick, keen intellect, thorough grasp of educational needs and problems, ready and understanding sympathy with pupils, parents, and fellow-teachers, early won the confidence of her superiors; and on the opening of St. Mary's School in Glens Falls, New York, in 1883, she was selected as Superior of that large and prosperous mission. She was transferred in 1887 to Albany, where, as Superior of the convent there, she was also supervisor of the parochial schools in the province; and served in that capacity until a threatened collapse, due to strenuous work and a delicate constitution, necessitated her removal to Denver, Colorado, From 1896 until her election as Superior-General in 1905, she was a member of the Council at the Mother House.

Endowed with rich natural gifts, high-minded and generous, and skilled in the execution of well-made plans, she found an outlet for her tireless energy in the many onerous duties which fell upon her willing shoulders during Reverend Mother Agatha's declining years. More and more did the latter recognize and appreciate the keen mentality of the junior councillor, her tact in management, and her equanimity in facing the difficulties inseparable from a share in the administration of a large Community whose members were spread from New York to California, and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. The penetrating mind and quick insight of the aged Superior-General, experienced in the ways of grace and full of faith in a guiding Providence, may have pictured a future not so distant, when

the bark of which she had long been the worthy pilot would be steered by the hand of Sister Agnes Gonzaga, to whom she entrusted many important affairs, and whose active and almost impetuous zeal she tempered by her own more conservative ideals. Thus was Sister Agnes Gonzaga prepared for the great responsibilities of the twelve years during which her religious government bore abundant fruit to the Congregation.

Serving with her as her Council for these twelve years were Mother Agnes Rossiter, Assistant-General, Sister Aloysius Andres, Sister Concordia Horan and Sister Columbine Ryan, women of long and varied experience and recognized ability in the Congregation, ready to encourage every movement that stood for religious or intellectual advancement. Such movements, whether local, diocesan or national, enlisted the active interest and practical assistance of Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga, who, while giving minute attention to Community affairs, kept in touch with the most recent trend of thought, especially in education, and shaped her policies along broad lines. "Quietly and unobtrusively she worked, as all great souls do work in the realms of nature and of grace; but grandly, too, and most successfully did she perform the many and varied tasks calling for her life-giving touch, her forward propulsion." [1]

She knew intimately the workings of her Community as one who had taken a part in all its activities. Through her official visits, enlivened by her stimulating conversation and made fruitful by her sympathy and advice, and through a correspondence remarkable for its literary excellence as well as for its spiritual unction, her intercourse with her numerous houses was kept up without interruption; and hospital and asylum, college, academy and parochial school felt her vivifying influence and the effect of her forceful personality. Her problems were not those which had confronted her predecessors in office, who in new and ever widening circles had helped to spread the Kingdom of Christ on earth by surmounting in many instances almost insuperable

[1] Archbishop Ireland in *Ariston*, p. 7. St. Paul, 1917.

obstacles; but into each line of work which they had well established she infused renewed spirit and vigor. New conditions of progress in education, in medical and social service, were calling for adjustment, and the Superior-General was responsive to each demand. In special schools and universities at home and in art institutes abroad, she procured for the Sisters the best opportunities of perfecting themselves in their various avocations; and she encouraged each to the highest individual efforts in science, letters, music or art, whatever the part assigned might be.

The fall of 1908 found her on her way to Rome in the interests of the Congregation. With Mother Agnes, Assistant-General, and Mother Seraphine, Provincial Superior of St. Paul, she embarked November 26 on the steamer *Provence,* another companion of the voyage being Archbishop Ireland. On December 3 they arrived at Havre, and after several days in Paris, left December 8 for the Mother House in Lyons. At Rome, where they arrived December 14, they were joined by Sister Celestine Howard, who in company with three of her Sisters bound for Florence, had preceded them. On January 9, they were received in private audience by Pius X. His Holiness expressed a lively interest in the history and progress of the Congregation, urged continued efforts towards increasing its strength and unity, and sent his blessing to the Sisters in America. A privilege much appreciated by Reverend-Mother and her companions was that of being present in the consistorial chamber of the Vatican on January 24, 1909, for the pronouncement by the Holy Father of the beatification of Clement Hofbaur and Joan of Arc.

Florence, Milan, Venice, Genoa and Lourdes were visited by the travellers before returning to St. Louis, which they reached in April. They had collected some valuable art treasures for the American houses, among them the Stations of the Cross by Gagliardi, the last great work executed by that distinguished artist. The Sisters then in Florence and others sent from the

Mother House in 1913 and 1914 increased the Community's small but prized collection, which includes originals from the brushes of Raphael,[2] Veronese, and Murillo, by first copies of Van Dyke, Botticelli, Perugino, Raphael, Carlo Dolci, Albertinelli and Philippino Lippi, made from masterpieces in the Pitti, Ufizi and Ferroni Galleries.

Like her predecessor, Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga made the training of teachers for the grade schools a special care, and in 1906, appointed as supervisor Sister Marcella Manifold, who had made a life-long study of the chartered schools in New York, and who became a recognized force in the organization of the school system in St. Louis. When a movement was started there for free diocesan high schools, it received its strongest impetus from the authorities in Carondelet. In the early nineties, Mother Agatha had at heart a similar project; and in the hope of bringing it to fruition, announced a central high school for girls at the Convent of Our Lady of Good Council, outlining a course and selecting teachers for the same. In the absence of encouragement and of correspondence with her far-seeing plans, the idea was abandoned, to be taken up as a matter of general interest thirty years later. In 1911, two Sisters were given by Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga as teachers for the Kain High School, one of two begun that year for girls,[3] the second being the Rosati in charge of two School Sisters of Notre Dame. These schools were merged the following year in the Rosati-Kain, a diocesan high school, which both communities working jointly, and with a faculty composed at present of twenty Sisters—ten from each community—have brought to the highest point of efficiency. It was recognized in its third year by the State University of Missouri as an affiliated institution, and in 1917 was accredited to the Catholic University of America.

[2] A *Madonna and Child* from the Certosa in Florence, presented in 1874 by Reverend Father Browne of Mobile, Alabama.

[3] The boys high schools were placed in charge of the Brothers of Mary.

Besides this high school, ten parochial schools [4] were supplied with teachers from the Mother House in the years between 1905 and 1917; and in the fall of 1909, the corner stone of the new St. Teresa's Academy and Junior College in the Country Club District of Kansas City was laid by Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis, assisted by the venerable Bishop Hogan and Right Reverend Thomas F. Lillis of Kansas City. The old site of 1866 had long since been surrounded by business districts; and the pioneer academy, a landmark of the city and the center of its earliest intellectual life, abandoned on the completion of the new convent and given over to wreckers a few years later, excited general interest, and admiration for the builders and materials of the half century past. The school had been chartered by the Missouri University in 1908 through the efforts of Sister Evelyn O'Neill, under whose direction the new St. Teresa's was planned and one of the proposed three buildings erected for academic and collegiate work.

A second institution in Kansas City which suffered from its changed environment as the progress of industrial life shifted the center of population southward, and smoking factory chimneys replaced the trees that had shaded well kept lawns, was St. Joseph's Hospital. Founded in 1875 in a private residence known as the Waterman House on Penn Street, it had, under its early superiors, Sisters Celestia O'Reilly, Virginia Joseph Burns and Liguori McNamara, and with the co-operation for forty-eight years of the eminent physician and surgeon, Dr. J. D. Griffith, overcome difficulties of limited space and help, had attracted to itself the best medical talent, and grown up with the

[4] These were as follows: St. Agnes' in St. Louis (1905); Holy Angels', Indianapolis (1907); St. Francis de Sales, Denver (1908); Sacred Heart, Manitowac, Wis. (1908), from which the Sisters were withdrawn in 1921; St. Viator's (Elementary and High) Chicago (1910); Holy Cross, Champaign, Illinois (1912); Sacred Heart, Columbia, Mo. (1912); and in Kansas City, Mo., the Cathedral (1910); the Assumption (1913); and Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mexican), (1917).

city as part of its great, pulsing life. In 1917, it transferred its patients to the newly erected building on Linwood Boulevard, a marvel of up-to-date construction and equipment.

Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga, who had supervised the plans for the great Renaissance structure, was among those present when ground was broken for it on September 1, 1915. Before its opening two years later, those who loved her best could not conceal the dread of her approaching end. "What has God not done for us? How shall we thank him adequately?" she had written in her community letter in 1911, announcing the seventy-fifth anniversary of the American foundation at Carondelet. In her "thoughtful looking backward," she had recalled to the minds of present earnest workers the hundreds of others "who have entered into a rest which is still work because of the example and impetus once given." Of such a character was the rest into which she prepared to enter, when, after a sojourn in Denver in the fall of 1916 in the vain effort to regain her failing strength, she returned to the Mother House, and with an unbroken spirit, endured months of physical suffering.

In May, she tendered her resignation to the members of the Chapter then in session, and welcomed their choice of a successor in Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter and of the latter's Council: Mother Rose Aurelia Higgins, Assistant-General, Sisters Aloysius Andres, Hyacinth Werden, and Margaret Mary Brady. At day break on the morning of June 14, Commencement Day that year for the girls of the academy, Mother Agnes Gonzaga's ardent soul, chastened by long hours of pain, went forth to meet its Maker. Twenty successive groups of white-robed seniors had received from her a greeting and a *God-speed* on their graduation day; the twenty-first viewed her still form with the awed gaze which exuberant youth turns on death. Everywhere was missed her welcome presence, "yet her spirit lingered in the old familiar places; sweet memories haunted study room and cloister; the charm of her personality was felt at every turn. Never had she so dominated a Commencement Day," writes a Sister cor-

ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

respondent of the *Ariston;*[5] "other classes had felt her friendly hand-clasp, had heard her inspiring words; but the Class of 1917 knew that her spirit, reaching down from eternity, blessed them and commended them to her Lord and King."

At her obsequies on June 16, the Most Reverend John Joseph Glennon, Archbishop of St. Louis, paid tribute to the character and virtues of Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga, from whom had come the first word of encouragement for the erection of a wondrous Cathedral, of a great Seminary for young Levites, and whose sympathy and support were back of every movement that "stood for the soul of the Church, for the spirit of faith, for the progress of the Kingdom of God." It was with these noble ends in view that she made unceasing efforts for the progress of her own Congregation; and an approving Providence crowned her labors, as it had crowned those of her predecessors, with blessings that bore fruit according to the promised hundredfold.

She had a faithful co-operator in Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter, who, as Assistant-General from 1905 until 1917, was intimately associated with her in all her undertakings. Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga relied much on the calm, clear judgment of her devoted assistant, whose sympathetic friendship and loyal support lightened her burden of responsibility. During twelve years, their united energies were directed to the increase of God's glory, and to the welfare, spiritual and temporal, of their large religious family. In the character of Mother Mary Agnes, a rare combination of firmness and gentleness inspired confidence and won all hearts. She was universally loved and esteemed by the Sisters, who received with joy the announcement of her election in 1917 as Superior-General.

The Sisters belonging to the St. Louis Mother House, at present (1922) under the government of Reverend Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter, number two thousand, four hundred and forty-one. They are located in twenty-four dioceses, with provincial

[5] Vol. XII, No. 1, p. 8.

houses and novitiates in the dioceses of St. Louis, St. Paul, Albany, Los Angeles and Savannah.[6] They conduct one hundred and sixty-five parochial grade schools, thirty-four high schools, eighteen academies, one conservatory of music and art with over eleven hundred pupils, and three colleges. They have also one school for colored children, and four Indian industrial schools registering one thousand Indian boys and girls. The pupils in the schools average sixty thousand, three hundred and sixty of whom are college students. Of this number two hundred and eighty are in the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul.

The benevolent institutions in charge of the Congregation include ten hospitals, eight orphan asylums, two institutes for the deaf, a day nursery, an infant asylum, and a temporary refuge for homeless children, with an average yearly record of four hundred and fifty inmates received and permanently placed. The average number of patients cared for yearly in the hospitals is sixteen thousand six hundred.

While the Congregation is chiefly devoted to education, it has never relaxed in its care of the sick, the afflicted and the homeless. The purpose of its founders, that its members while laboring for their own perfection, might "serve their neighbor with care, diligence and cordiality," [7] was followed out, as we have seen, in the first work undertaken by the Sisters as an organized body, among the orphan girls of Mont-Ferrand. "We must labor to establish an Institute of self-annihilation," wrote John Paul Médaille to the first Sisters of St. Joseph at Le Puy in October 1650. "It should be lowly and hidden like Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, wherein He is so concealed as to be almost invisible. Let it be nothing in the eyes of the world; but before God, whatever He in His infinite mercy may design to make it."

[6] The Sisters in this diocese, originally from Le Puy, France, and until recently under Episcopal jurisdiction, were affiliated to the St. Louis Congregation in 1922, and with the approval of Pope Benedict XV, were received as a distinct province.

[7] *Constitutions*, p. 4. Lyons, 1847.

After its establishment in Lyons in 1696, we find the Sisters, following the lead of Divine grace, engaged in all the active works of charity, caring for the sick in hospitals, instructing prisoners conducting dispensaries for the poor, and even maintaining a refuge for penitent girls.[8] Their schools were located in places where no other teaching community existed, and were chiefly for the children of the poor.

The Revolution, dispersing the congregation, left as one of its most dire consequences an almost total ignorance of God and religion among the young; and the necessity for religious teachers, in the opinion of the Cardinal-Archbishop of Lyons, over-shadowed every other need of the period immediately following those diastrous years.[9] He emphasized this necessity in the reorganization of the Congregation, realizing the great influence which well-instructed young women, as the future mothers of France, would exercise on society;[10] and the training of teachers became an object of special care and attention on the part of Mother Saint John Fontbonne and her successors, though the works of charity were also zealously promoted.

"They will make good infirmarians," wrote their spiritual director, Father Cholleton, in 1836, enumerating to Bishop Rosati the qualifications of the Sisters who left France that year to make the American foundation; and their weekly ministrations to the poor and sick in the neighborhood of their primitive dwelling bore eloquent testimony to the justice of the characterization. Many years passed, however, before they assumed the rôle of nurses in an official capacity. When the need for such service came, it did not find them wanting, though no scientific preparation, such as is common today, was given to the few Sisters who were sent in 1853 in answer to Bishop Crétin's urgent demands to establish the pioneer hospital in Minnesota and the first permanent one in charge of the Community. The sign-manual of

[8] Bouchage, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

their profession was the compassionate heart, eager to soothe away pain from the weary sufferers, the woman's intuition guiding their fingers in the accomplishment of their new and difficult tasks.

Monuments to the success and perseverance of that small band and of the devoted Sisters who followed them, are the great structures of today, into the plans and equipment of which have entered the latest and best ideas of chemist, physicist and surgeon, and where small armies of registered nurses and pharmacists and expert technicians supplement in ward and sick room, in the laboratories, electro-therapeutic and X-ray departments, the labors of skilled physicians in making each hospital or sanatorium a temple of science as well as of mercy.

The last contribution to this group of activities was made when the new St. Mary's in Minneapolis was opened in 1918 and registered under the College of Surgeons. It superseded the earlier one—pretentious and well equipped in its time—built on a slight elevation above the right bank of the Mississippi and commanding refreshing views of water and woodland. From service plants and laboratories for specialized research, to exquisite chapel, expansive sun-parlors and roof-gardens, it forms a complete unit, evidencing the scientific builder, and contributing in its every feature, not the least important of which is a free clinic and dispensary for the poor, to the ease and comfort of those who suffer. The Government recognized the high standard maintained at St. Mary's when it requisitioned a department for rehabilitation work among veterans of the World War.

An average of one thousand seven hundred is the yearly record of orphaned or homeless children for whom provision is made in the various institutions of the Congregation. One of these, the Home for the Friendless, in Chicago, is unique in furnishing a temporary refuge for destitute children until permanent homes are found for them. It is located on the border of Lake Michigan in the old historic building that from 1871 until the opening of the diocesan Industrial Home in 1912 was St. Joseph's

MOUNT ST. JOSEPH. PROVINCIAL HOUSE, AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

Orphan Asylum. In its present capacity, the Home fills a pressing need of the great city, where daily tragedies in child life bring pitiful bits of humanity to the convent door, beyond which lies for many of them the first homelike experiences in their dwarfed and sunless years. Applicants are admitted through the Central Bureau of Catholic Charities, to which they are referred by all the welfare agencies of the city, including the Municipal and United States District Courts.

The great majority of these unfortunate children arrive at the Home in a wretched condition; but each emerges from the isolation ward, to which he is first consigned, transformed by care and cleanliness into an apparently new being, and enters a cheery class or playroom with a brighter outlook on life than has ever before been vouchsafed him. Permanent records kept at the institution show four thousand inmates received in eight years, and given, during the temporary sojourn which each is allowed to make until parent, relative or Good Samaritan is found to provide for a better future, daily secular and religious instruction to aid them in their battle with life.

In the field of deaf-mute education, the extent and quality of work done by the Sisters of Saint Joseph are comparatively unknown outside the circles of the deaf and those sympathetically interested in this afflicted class. From 1837, when Sister Celestine Pommerel and Sister Saint John Fournier responded to the appeal of the first Bishop of St. Louis for laborers in what was then an uncultivated field, until the present, the Congregation in America has never discontinued the onerous and at times most discouraging task of conveying a knowledge of truth to those silent ones, for whom there is "no charm in music, no joy in children's voices," and of teaching them to give forceful and beautiful expression to the imprisoned thoughts struggling in their eager minds for utterance.

Left almost wholly without material aid in the difficult undertaking, the devoted teachers could count for decades together only on the assistance and example of the Great Teacher, whose

"Ephpheta!" spoken nearly two thousand years ago and followed by miracles of speech and hearing, gave evidence of His divine compassion for this portion of His flock. The children brought under the care of the Sisters were often of the most destitute class, and the problem of supporting them was added to that of providing capable instruction. On the withdrawal in 1847 of the State funds granted in Missouri by a legislative act of 1839 for the maintenance and education of the deaf, the Sisters were thrown on their own resources and the charity of well-disposed friends in keeping up their school for deaf-mute girls. In 1870, they were able to begin at Hannibal, Missouri, a branch for boys. This was transferred in 1885 to St. Louis, where both boys and girls have since remained.

Under the combined and oral methods of instruction, the latter including lip-reading and articulation, the students are given an eight year course, supplemented by high school subjects for those who desire to pursue them. The industrial branches enter largely into this course; and young men and women, equipped for life and citizenship, yearly leave the school to become useful members of the business world and the makers of happy Catholic homes. Graduates of the institution are found in shops, manufacturing plants, offices and banks, and wherever efficiency is not dependent on the ability to speak and hear. The girls become adept seamstresses, typists and accountants, and in rare instances have developed great skill in art and music. Six of their number answered the call to a religious life, and as members of the community known as "The Little Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Dolors," [11] in Montreal, Canada, are devoting their talents to the education of those afflicted like themselves.

The community annals of the deaf give prominence to the

[11] This Sisterhood, founded in April 1887 for deaf-mute girls who desire to consecrate themselves to God, is affiliated to the Sisters of Charity of Providence. Its labors are confined to the large institution for the deaf conducted by the latter community in Montreal. Of this school, Sister Teresa (Ouida Erd) the first to enter from the St. Louis institute, was for years the only English teacher.

work of Sister Adelina Whalen, whose whole religious life of forty years was spent in teaching hundreds of eager and grateful students, to whom the sound of her voice was unknown, but whose understanding hearts hold her in grateful remembrance; of Sister Mary Suso Colgan and Sister Mary Borgia Davis, the last named connected for twenty-seven years with the deaf-mute institute in St. Louis. On these and their assistant teachers devolved for many years a great part of the religious instruction of the adult Catholic deaf in St. Louis and in Oakland, California, there being very few priests in either place acquainted with the signs. Since 1914, Jesuit Fathers of St. Louis University, having mastered the different methods of teaching the deaf, direct the sodalities, literary and debating societies, and other benevolent, social, and religious activities of which St. Joseph's Deaf-mute Institute is the center.

Thus is perpetuated the labor of sacrifice and love which our pioneer Sisters inaugurated in the diocese of St. Louis, emulating the zeal of John of Beverly and Francis de Sales, of the devoted Abbés de l'Epée and Sicard, and adding a most praise-worthy avocation to the numerous others by which the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the United States endeavor to co-operate with the Divine Exemplar in the salvation of souls.

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1. *Community Archives.* The principal manuscript sources for this work are in the archives of the Mother House, St. Louis, Missouri. They consist of (1) annals, documents and records (1836–1922); (2) diaries, letters and memoirs written by members of the Congregation, and covering much of the period between 1836 and 1890; (3) memoirs of Eliza McKenney Brouillet (1841–1846); (4) memoranda and letters from the Sisters of St. Joseph in Brooklyn, Buffalo, Wheeling, Toronto and Philadelphia; also copies of records (prior to 1857) from the community archives in Toronto and Philadelphia; (5) letters from the Mother House in Le Puy relative to the martyrs of the Revolution; (6) copies of official documents from the Mother House in the Diocese of Tarentaise, Savoy; (7) "A Sketch of Our Saints and Martyrs," Sister Julia Littenecker; (8) Spanish War correspondence (Sisters) (1898–1899); (9) European journals of Mother Mary Agnes Rossiter and Reverend Mother Agnes Gonzaga Ryan (1908–1909); and Roman and Florentine diary of Sister Baptista Montgomery (1913–1914); (10) letters of Pope Pius IX; Cardinals Barnabo, Quaglia, McCloskey; Archbishops Peter Richard Kenrick, Feehan, Elder, Salpointe, Lamy, Bourgade; Bishops Baraga, Mrak, Amat, Juncker, Grace, Conroy, Duggan, Foley, Hogan, Ludden, Gillow, of Oaxaco, Mexico; Fathers St Cyr, Abram J. Ryan, G. Raymond, Baxter, S.J., Ménet, S.J., Terhorst, Jacker, Donnelly, Loyzance, S.J., Keveny, Paris, Melcher, Madame de la Rochejaquelin, and nunumerous others; (11) official documents from Rome authenticating the relics in the Martyr's chapel.

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4. *Municipal Records.* Some important facts regarding the early history of the Sisters in Carondelet were obtained from the minutes of the Carondelet Council proceeding prior to 1851.

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APPENDIX

INSTITUTIONS IN CHARGE OF THE CONGREGATION

(Statistics of 1921–1922)

ST. LOUIS PROVINCE

St. Louis, City and County.

School or Academy	No. of Sisters	Lay Teachers	No. of Pupils
Mother House & Novitiate	115		
* St. Joseph's Acadamy	11	3	222
All Saints School	4		231
Assumption	6	1	296
Cathedral	8		347
Holy Angels	5	1	243
Holy Name	11		529
Holy Rosary	12		639
Nativity	3	1	241
Notre Dame	7	1	366
Our Lady of Lourdes	2	1	49
Rosati-Kain, Diocesan High			511

10 Sisters of St. Joseph
10 Sisters of Notre Dame

St. Agnes	7	3	375
St. Ann	4		173
St. Anthony	14		978
St. Bridget	3		169

* Institutions with High School Departments.

** High Schools only.

School or Academy	No. of Sisters	Lay Teachers	No. of Pupils
St. Cecilia	6		300
St. Columbkille	3		139
St. Edward	7	3	461
St. John	2	1	88
Sts. John & James	3		100
St. Lawrence O'Toole	5		266
St. Leo	11	2	668
St. Luke	3		174
St. Margaret	11		533
Sts. Mary & Joseph	4		140
St. Mary Magdalen	2		64
St. Matthew	12	2	732
St. Philip Neri	4		231
St. Rita	2		69
St. Roch	5		156
St. Vincent	8		457

Fontbonne College, to be constructed at Hill Crest.

OUTSIDE ST. LOUIS

Alabama.			
Mobile, Cathedral Boys' School			
Creole "			66
St. Patrick's "			80
Colorado.			
Denver, St. Francis de Sales	10		348
St. Patrick's	8		161
St. Catherine's			
Illinois.			
Campus, Sacred Heart	4		80
Champaign, Holy Cross	4		132
Chicago, Nativity	25		1106
* St. Viator	14		650

School or Academy	No. of Sisters	Lay Teachers	No. of Pupils
Newton, St. Joseph	3		74
* Peoria, Academy of Our Lady	13		206
Cathedral School	6		260
Waterloo, St. Joseph	6		180
Indiana.			
* Indianapolis, Sacred Heart	19	1	789
Holy Angels	6		212
Michigan.			
* Hancock, St. Patrick	11		400
St. Joseph	9		250
Ishpeming, St. John	11		370
* Marquette, Baraga (Cathedral School)	16		716
Negaunee, St. Paul	8		410
Missouri.			
* Chillicothe, St. Joseph's Academy	11		60
St. Columban's School	3		84
* Hannibal, St. Joseph's Academy	10	2	307
Kansas City, Assumption	2		98
Cathedral School	7		315
Holy Rosary (Italian)	7		402
Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mexican)	3		109
* Our Lady of Perpetual Help	12		500
St. Teresa Junior College	22	5	150
Visitation	2		31
* Ste. Genevieve, Ste. Genevieve School	11		380
St. Joseph, St. Patrick	11		406
Immaculate Conception	5		186
Oklahoma.			
* Muskogee, Nazareth Academy	13		331

School or Academy	No. of Sisters	Lay Teachers	No. of Pupils
Wisconsin.			
* Green Bay. St. Joseph's Academy	13		190
St. John's	7		350
Keshena. Indian Industrial	10		237
Oconto. St. Peter (French)	5		250
Shawano. Sacred Heart	6		156
West De Pere, St. Joseph	4		174

PROVINCE OF ST. PAUL

St. Paul.			
St. Joseph's Novitiate Normal	77		
* St. Joseph's Academy	31		490
College of St. Catherine	15	16	280
Derham Hall Academic Dept.			120
Cathedral School	17		702
Blessed Sacrament	4		195
St. Agatha's Conservatory	24		1017
St. James	8		381
St. John	8		345
St. Louis (French)	5		183
St. Luke	10		437
St. Mark	16		725
St. Mary	9		351
St. Michael	12		544
St. Vincent	8		429
Minneapolis.			
Ascension School	16		809
Holy Angels Academy	15		86
Our Lady of Lourdes	8		280
Pro-Cathedral	16		858

School or Academy	No. of Sisters	Lay Teachers	No. of Pupils
St. Anthony	12		580
* * St. Margaret's Academy	14		270
St. Stephan	8		404

OUTSIDE OF THE TWIN CITIES

Minnesota.			
Anoka, St. Ann's Academy	9		186
* Bird Island, St. Mary	9		222
Currie. Immaculate Heart	7		140
* Fulda. St. Gabriel	11		250
* Ghent. St. Agnes	6		171
* Graceville. St. Mary's Academy	12		323
Hastings. St. Teresa	6		113
Kilkenny. St. Canice	7		97
* Le Sueur. St. Ann	11		190
Le Sueur Center. St. Mary	7		138
* Marshall. St. Joseph's Academy	10		294
* Morris. St. Mary	10		254
Olivia. St. Aloysius	5		168
Stillwater. St. Michael	9		203
St. Peter. St. Peter	6		98
* Waverly. St. Mary	8		190
White Bear. St. Mary	8		256
North Dakota.			
* * Grand Forks. St. James Academy	14	1	120
Pro-Cathedral School	13		445
* Jamestown. St. John's Academy	24	1	350
South Dakota.			
* Watertown. Immaculate Conception	12		401

PROVINCE OF TROY, NEW YORK

New York. Troy. School or Academy	No. of Sisters	Lay Teachers	No. of Pupils
St. Joseph's Seminary & Novitiate	89		
St. Anthony (Italian)	2	3	245
St. Augustine	12	2	511
St. Francis	4		188
St. Joseph	20		950
St. John the Baptist (French)	4		170
St. Lawrence (German	4		182
St. Michael	4		215
* St. Patrick's Academy [1]	11	1	476
St. Peter's Academy	13		575
Albany.			
St. Ann's Academy	12		506
St. Anthony (Italian)	2	1	115
Cathedral Academy	20	2	760
College of St. Rose	8	3	50
Amsterdam.			
St. Mary's Academy	13	1	734
Binghamton.			
St. Mary's Academy	12		613
Sts. Cyril & Methodius (Slovak)	8		374
Cohoes.			
St. Bernard's Academy	15	3	630
Glens Falls.			
St. Mary's Academy	26		1202
Green Island.			
St. Joseph	3		135
Hoosick Falls.			
St. Mary's Academy	8		340
Hudson.			
St. Mary's Academy	12	1	428

[1] Academies in Troy Province all chartered under the Regents of New York as high schools.

School or Academy	No. of Sisters	Lay Teachers	No. of Pupils
Little Falls.			
St. Mary's Academy	17	7	872
Rome.			
St. Peter	11		397
Saratoga.			
St. Peter	9		245
Schenectady.			
St. Joseph's Academy	10		425
Syracuse.			
Sacred Heart Academy	7		400
St. Lucy's "	18		763
St. John's "	11		472
St. Patrick's "	12	1	656
St. Vincent de Paul	9		390
Utica.			
St. Agnes Academy	10		514
St. Francis de Sales	19		823
St. Patrick	7		389
Watervliet.			
St. Bridget's Academy	9	1	406

PROVINCE OF LOS ANGELES

California.			
Los Angeles			
St. Mary's Provincial House	65		
* St. Mary's Academy	18	3	325
Holy Cross School	9		510
St. Cecilia's "	5		243
St Patrick's "	5		300
St. Vincent's "	11		573
Banning. St. Boniface (Indian)	7		120
Fresno. Our Lady of Victory	4		100

School or Academy	No. of Sisters	Lay Teachers	No. of Pupils
* Oakland. St. Joseph's Institute	11		373
* Oxnard. St. Joseph's Institute	10		156
Redondo Beach. St. James	4		100
* San Diego.			
Academy of Our Lady of Peace.	18	2	172
Our Lady of the Angels	5		256
St. Joseph's School	4	2	200
St. John's "	4		155
* San Francisco. Star of the Sea	16		750
Arizona.			
* Tucson. St. Joseph's Academy	14		201
St. Augustine's School	5		200
San Xavier del Bac (Papago Indians)	7		109
Komatke. St. John's (Pima Indians)	9	2	525
	3 Franciscan Brothers.		
* Prescott. St. Joseph's Academy	10		225

PROVINCE OF SAVANNAH

Georgia.			
Atlanta.			
St. Anthony's School	5		115
Sacred Heart	10		210
Augusta.			
* St. Joseph's Academy	12		105
Brunswick.			
St. Francis Xavier	4		93
Savannah.			
Sacred Heart	8		302
Sharon.			
Sacred Heart Academy	7		70

Hospitals	Sisters	Nurses	Patients (1922)
Arizona.			
Tucson. St. Mary's	20	12	760
Minnesota.			
St. Paul. St. Joseph's	34	88	6098
Minneapolis. St. Mary's	34	118	4429
Michigan.			
Hancock. St. Joseph's	15		700
Missouri.			
Kansas City. St. Joseph's	29	70	4545
New York.			
Amsterdam. St. Mary's	12		700
Troy. St. Joseph's	3		379
North Dakota.			
Fargo. St. John's	30	5	2626
Grand Forks. St. Michael's	17	21	1343
Jamestown. Holy Trinity	8	25	1100

Other Institutions	Sisters	Inmates
Arizona.		
Tucson. St. Mary's Orphanage	6	100
California.		
Oakland. Deaf-Mute Institute	6	25
Georgia.		
Washington. St. Joseph's Orphan Home	5	45
Illinois.		
Chicago. Home for the Friendless	8	91
Minnesota.		
Minneapolis St. Mary's Orphanage, (Boys)	18	138

Other Institutions	Sisters	Inmates
St. Paul. Girls' Orphan Home	11	90
Missouri.		
Kansas City. St. Joseph's Home (Girls)	14	150
St. Louis. St. Joseph's Home (Boys)	20	90
Deaf-Mute Home	24	62
New York.		
Binghamton. St. Mary's Orphanage	24	175
Troy. St. Joseph's Orphan Home	19	262

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